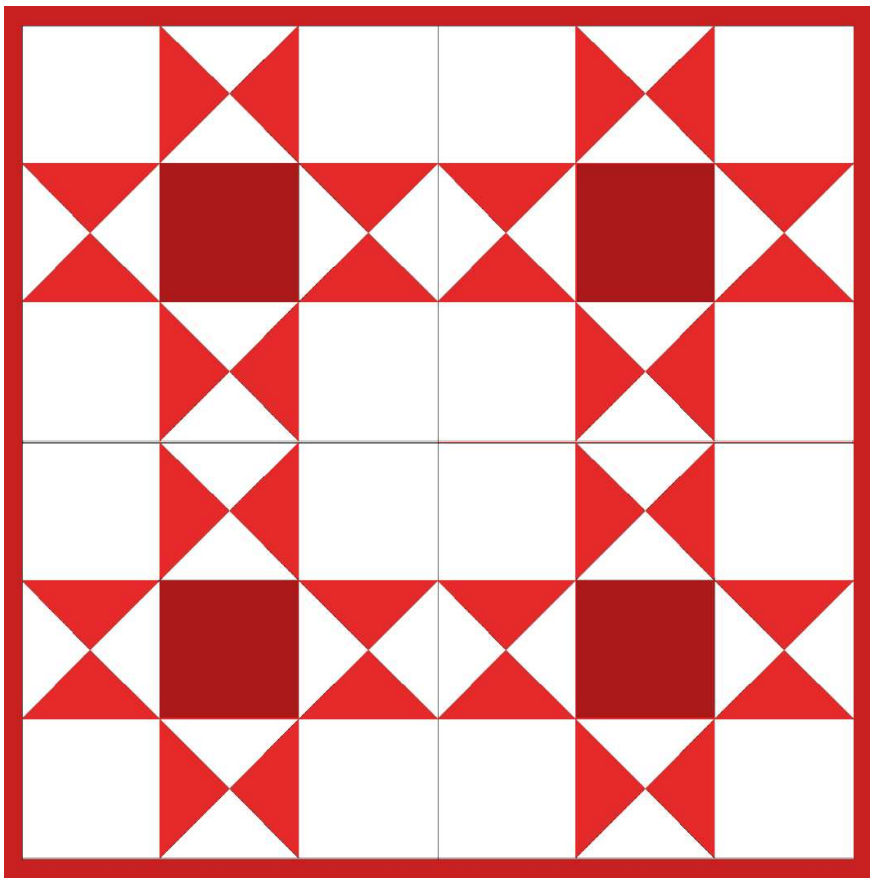
The Hess Homestead

A Mennonite Farm in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

By Lee J. Stoltzfus
Research by Clarke E. Hess
Lititz, PA



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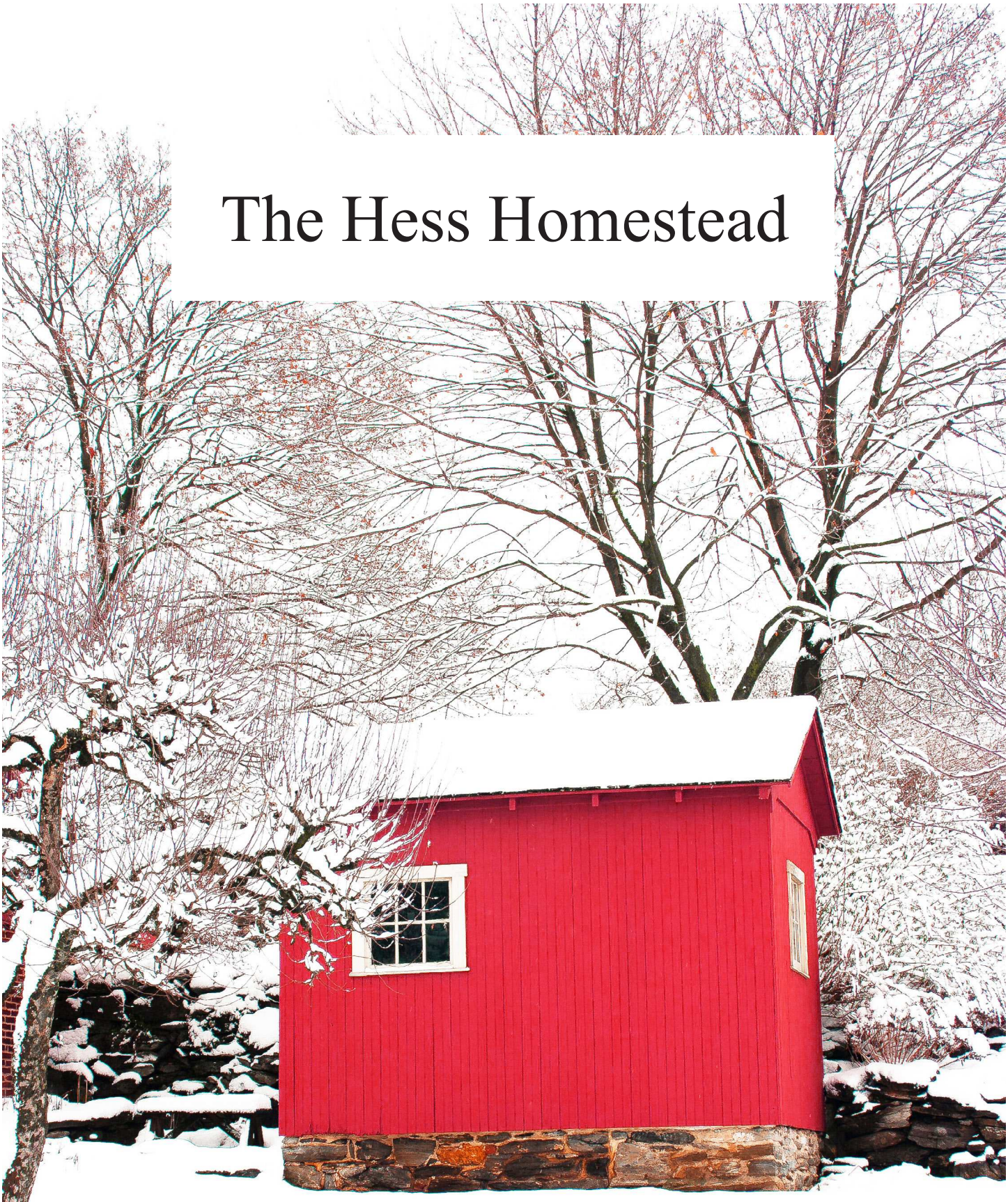

Written & Published by Lee J. Stoltzfus

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Historical Research by Clarke Hess

The Hess Homestead near Lititz, PA

The Hess Homestead in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, is a historic Mennonite farmstead near the town of Lititz. The property is an ancestral home of the Hess family, who purchased the land from William Penn's sons in 1735. The log farmhouse is the earliest house in Pennsylvania associated with the Hess family.

The primary buildings at this site were constructed by the Hess family in the 18th century, including a 1740s log farmhouse, a 1778 stone farmhouse, and a 1769 oil mill. Both houses served as church meeting houses for the local Mennonite community until 1856, when the first Hess Mennonite church building was constructed nearby.

The homestead structures survive today on several adjoining properties. These farm buildings are iconic examples of the vernacular architecture of rural Pennsylvania Germans.

Author's note: It has been easy to tell this story of the Hess Homestead. All I needed to do was to write really fast while Clarke Hess told me hours of history of this farm.

This homestead was first settled in the 1730s by Clarke's great-great-great-great-great-great grandparents, Jacob and Feronica Hess. Jacob's parents, Hans and Magdalena Hess, were the first Hesses known to arrive in America.

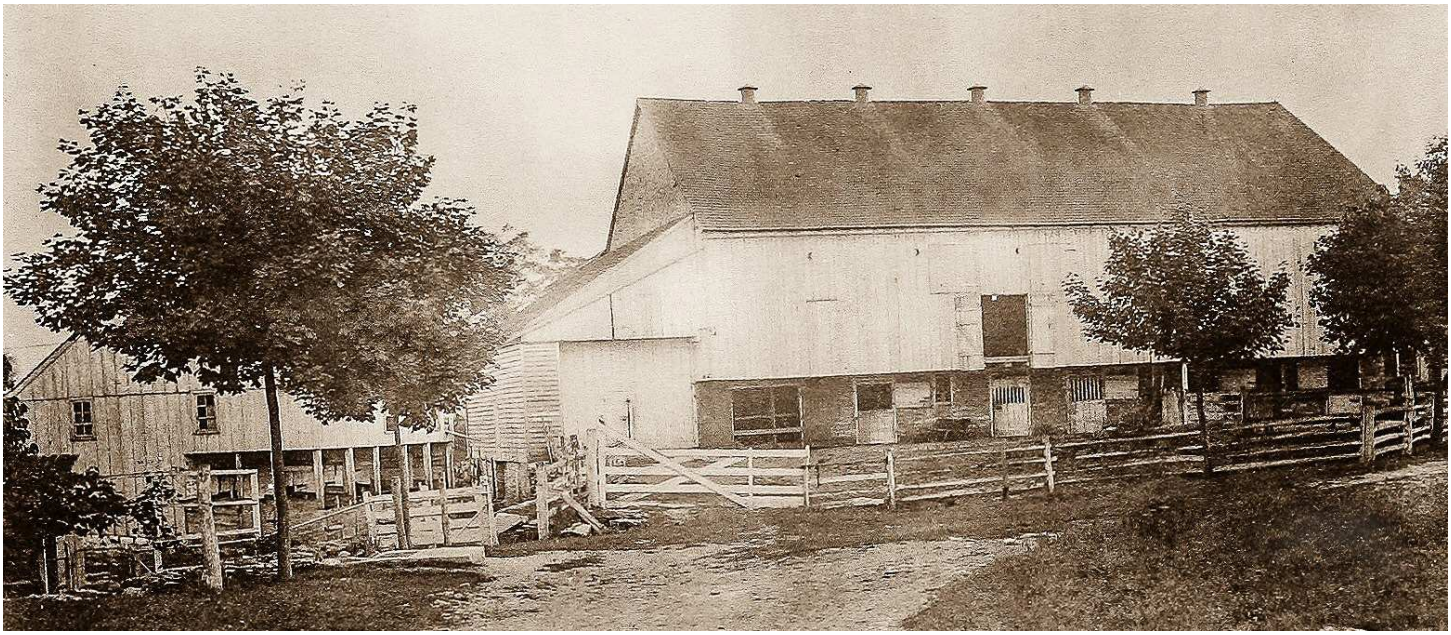
Clarke's memory was filled to overflowing with his family's historical facts, figures, birth dates, marriage dates, death dates, and more. He could explain hundreds of years of his family's Mennonite history without using cheat sheets or notes.

So all I had to do was condense Clarke's information, write the text, add my photographs, build a website, and design this book.

Lee J. Stoltzfus

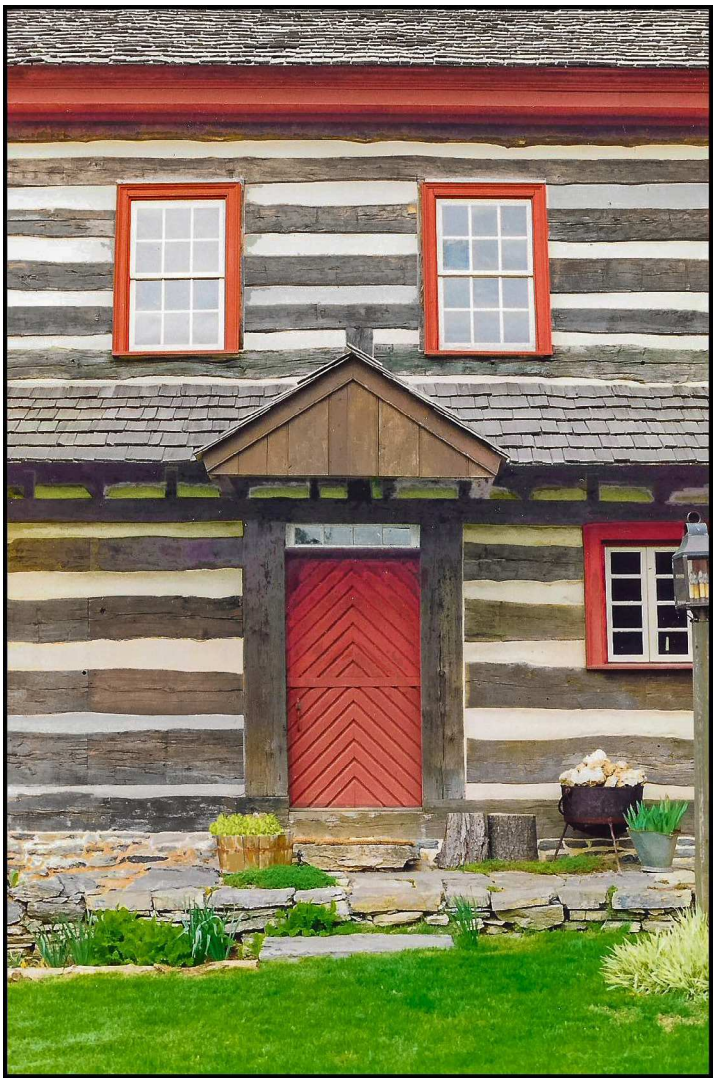
Above: The log farmhouse and the summer kitchen, circa 1910.
The logs were covered with weatherboarding. A windmill pumped water from the well.

Below: The log farmhouse after restoration, with an addition.



Above: The barn and pigsty behind the log farmhouse, ca. 1910. The barn burned in 1922, sparked by cinders from a Reading Railroad locomotive.

The log farmhouse is the earliest house in Pennsylvania associated with the Hess family.



Hess Family History: Plain and Fancy Mennonites

Above: Preacher Jonas H. Hess and wife Annie S. (Franck) Hess. They lived in the log farmhouse from 1862 to 1910. (Portraits of their six children are on the opposite page.)

The farmstead was first surveyed in 1730 as a 200-acre tract for Hans Hess (ca. 1683-1733). This Hess patriarch immigrated to Pennsylvania in 1717 with his wife Magdalena (ca. 1680s-1767) and their children. The family emigrated from Germany or Switzerland. The Hess' European history is uncertain, although Hans and Magdalena are the first Hess immigrants known to arrive in America.

Hans and Magdalena's oldest son Jacob Hess (ca. 1706-1741) built the first house on this tract ca. 1730s, with wife Veronica. This Hess family received title to the farm from the Penn family in 1735.

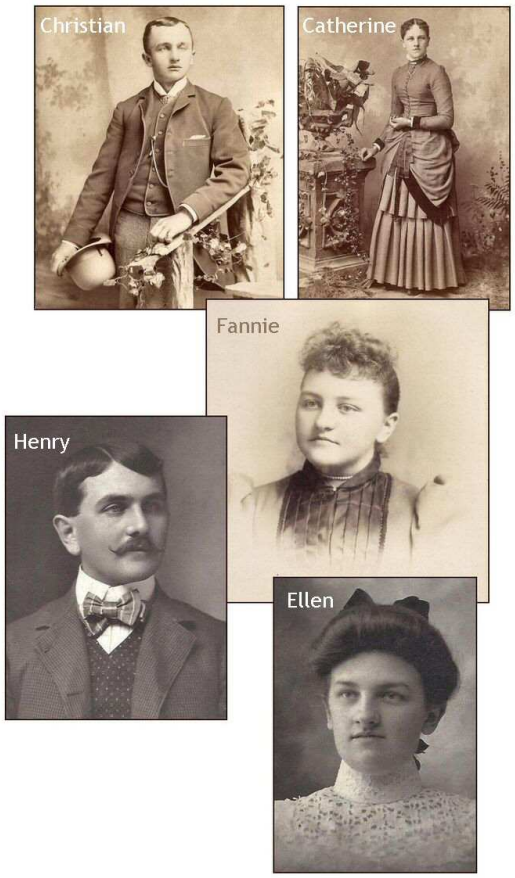
The present log farmhouse was built ca. 1744 for Jacob's widow Veronica and their children. Their oldest son Johannes (1730-1778) was the next owner, with wife Susanna (Landis) Hess.

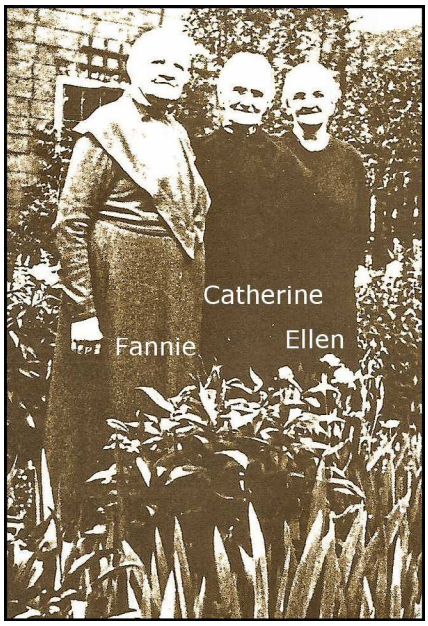
In 1784 their eldest son Christian Hess (1757-1816) received this farmstead. Six years later, in 1790, Christian deeded this part of the farm to his brother, John Hess (1768-1830), and wife Esther (Hershey) Hess (1769-1824).

The next farmstead owners were John and Esther Hess' youngest son Henry Hess and wife Catherine (Huber) Hess. In turn, their youngest son became the next owner, Preacher Jonas H. Hess, with wife Annie S. (Franck) Hess, followed by their son Henry F. Hess and wife Anna C. Shenk.

In 1922 the farmstead left the Hess family until 1985 when it was purchased by Clarke E. Hess, a great-great-great-great-great-great grandson of the immigrant Hans Hess. Clarke Hess spent several years restoring the buildwings for use as his residence.

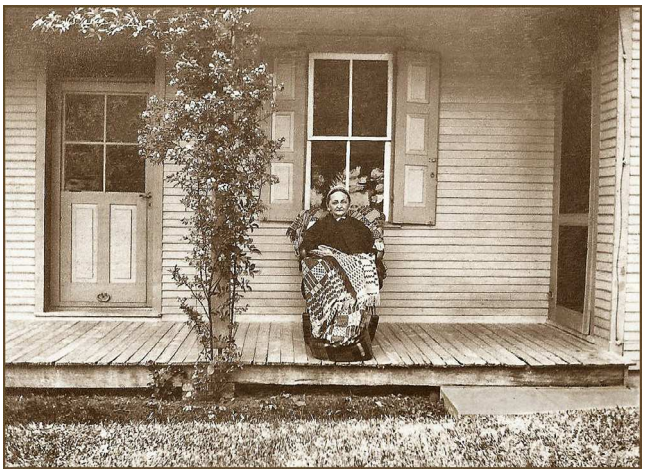
Hess Brothers and Sisters Born in the Log Farmhouse:
(They dressed fancy in their youth, and dressed plain in adulthood.)





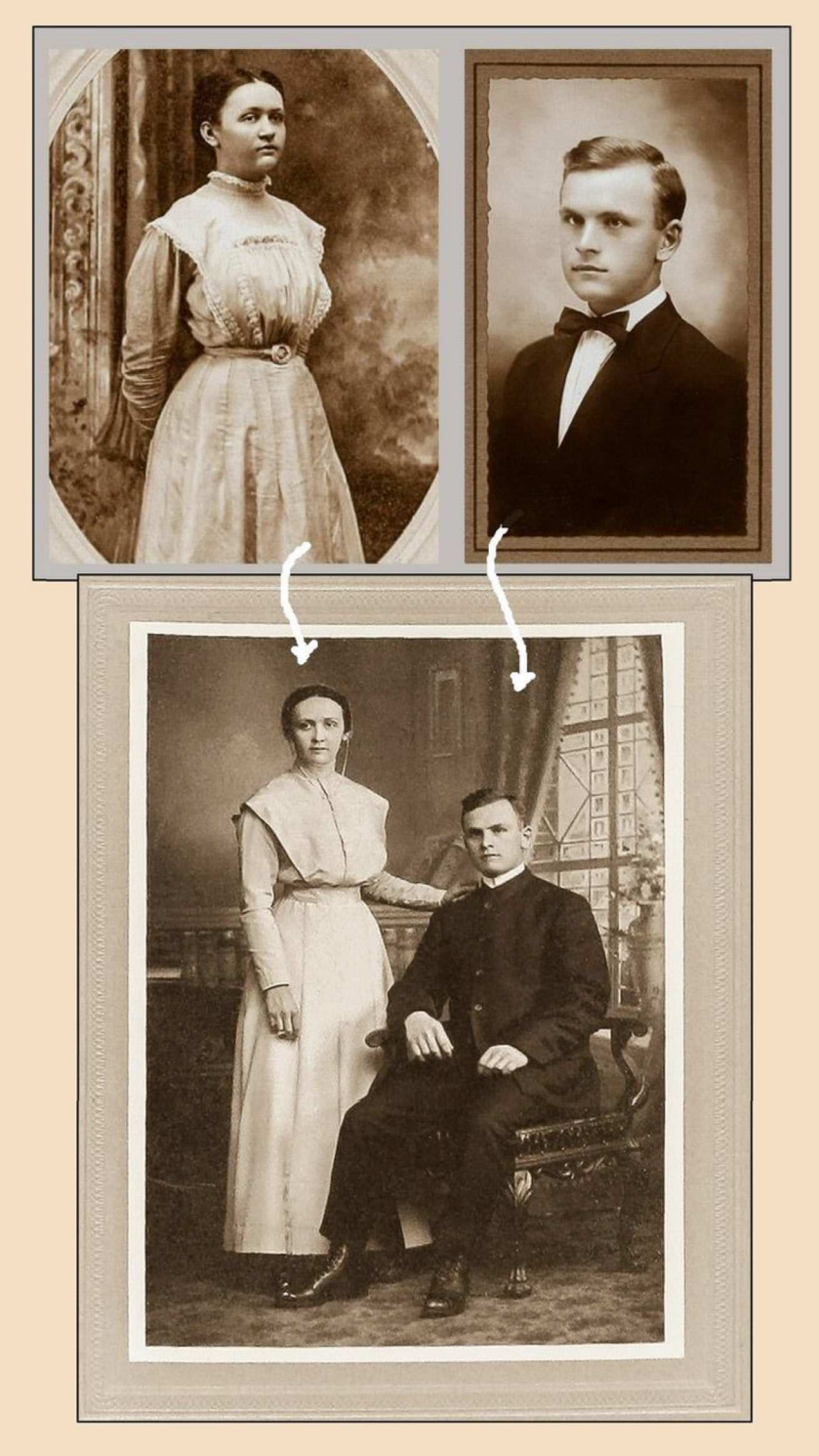
Above: Three of these same Hess sisters later in life: Fannie (Hess) Betzner, Catherine (Hess) Musser, and Ellen (Hess) Charles.

(Above, clockwise, from top left): Christian F. Hess (1867-1940), Catherine F. Hess (1865-1959), Fannie F. Hess (1871-1959), Ellen F. Hess (1881-1959), Henry F. Hess (1873-1959). (They were dressing fancy, before joining church).



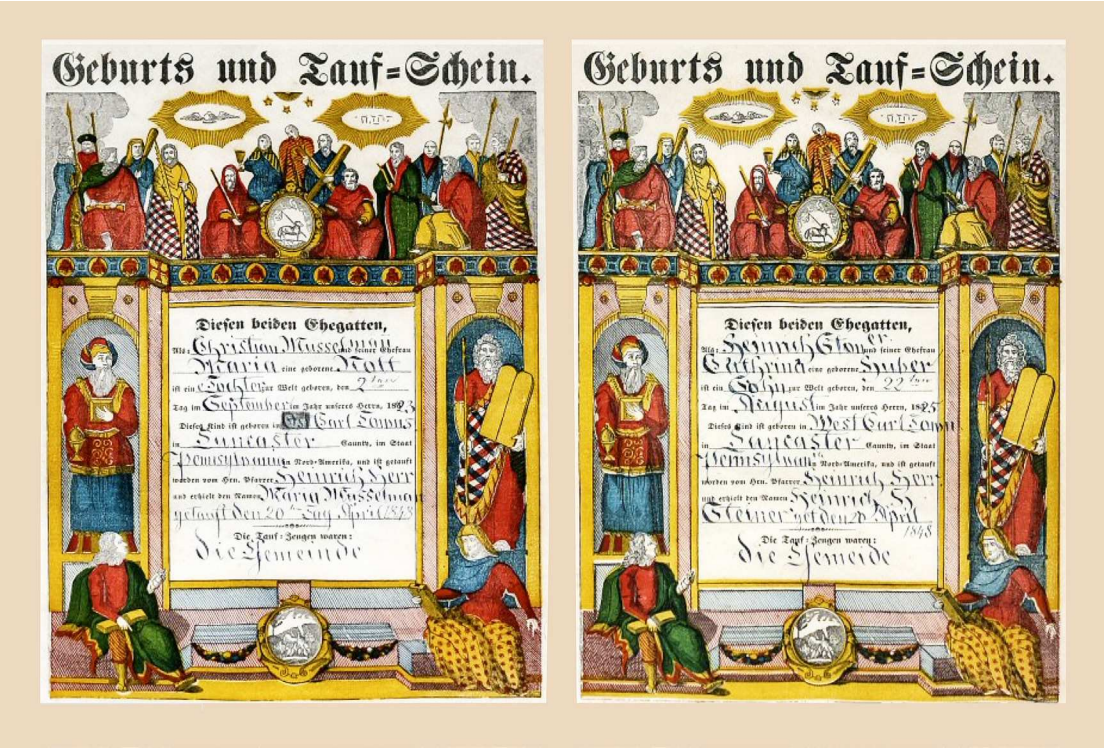
Their oldest sister Lizzie F. (Hess) Bucher (1863-1927).

Elsewhere: More Mennownite Relatives of the Homestead Hesses:
Fancy before joining church. Plain after joining church.



Above: Maternal grandparents of Clarke Hess, before and after they joined church. Reuben S. Horst (1891-1987) married Ida S. Stoner (1891-1978) in 1914. The photo on the bottom is their wedding portrait.

Above: Paternal grandparents of Clarke Hess, before and after they joined church. Aaron R. Hess (1886-1963) married Lillie H. Bender (1886-1975) in 1908. The photo on the left is their wedding portrait.



Above: Matching baptism certificates for Mennonite husband and wife when they joined church in 1848, five years after their marriage. Mary Musselman (1823-1878) and Henry H. Stoner (1825-1894), great-great grandparents of Clarke Hess. They were baptized by Preacher Henry Herr, and their sponsors were the *Gemeinde* (the congregation).

The 1740s Log Farmhouse

The log farmhouse at the Hess Homestead is constructed with a Germanic architectural technique known as *Blockstanderbau*, featuring vertical log corner posts, with many other vertical and diagonal timbers.

Colonial Pennsylvania house builders brought corner-post traditions with them from Europe. This form of post-and-beam construction is widespread throughout Germanic Europe.

This corner-post design is unusual for historic Pennsylvania log houses. Most 18th-century log houses in Pennsylvania used a V notch for joining corners, rather than using corner posts.

This Hess house is considered one of the most elaborate surviving examples of *Blockstanderbau* corner-post design.

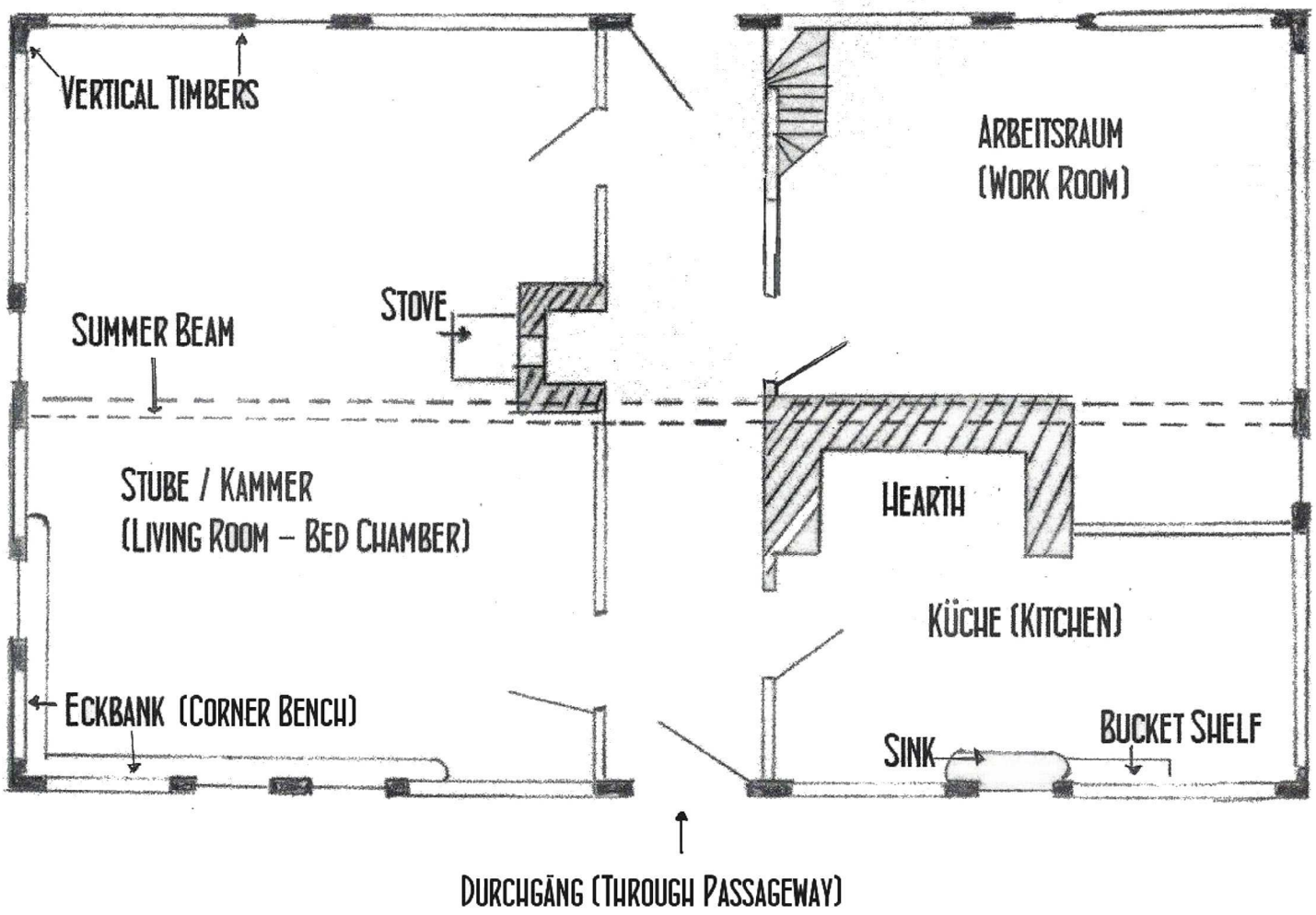
Blockstanderbau houses are, in effect, half-timbered houses. The horizontal timbers are for infill, rather than for load-bearing support. These horizontals serve the same function as brick infill or wattle-and-daub filler in other half-timber framing.

The Hess log farmhouse originally had 33 vertical posts, of which most survive. The horizontal timbers are tenoned into mortises chiseled into the posts. At each tenon is a chiseled-in guide symbol, consisting of a Roman numeral or other directional mark. Each corner has two interior, diagonal braces. The four corner posts are tenoned into interlocking sill logs.

The Vertical Timber Construction:
Blockstanderbau

Above left: Corner post and pent roof. Above right: Diagonal timbers in the *Küche* (kitchen). Below: Roman numeral marks to guide assembly of the logs.

The Log Farmhouse Floorplan



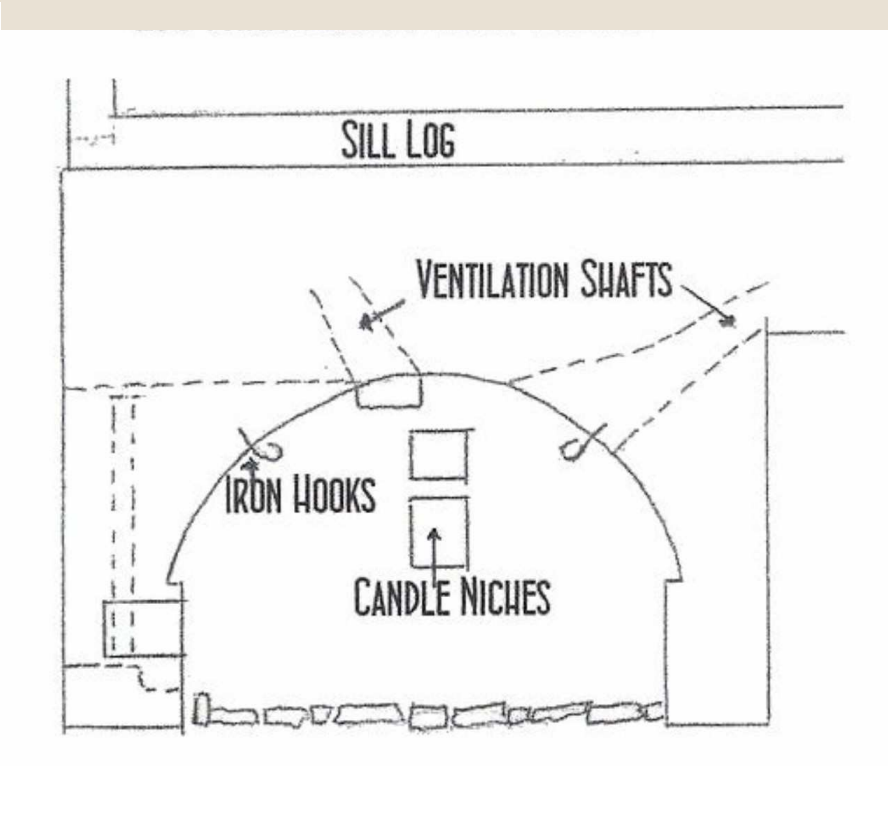
The log farmhouse's primary front door opens into a central hallway which is surrounded by a nonsymmetrical arrangement of interior rooms, including the *Küche* (kitchen), *Stube* (stove room), and *Arbeitsraum* (work room).

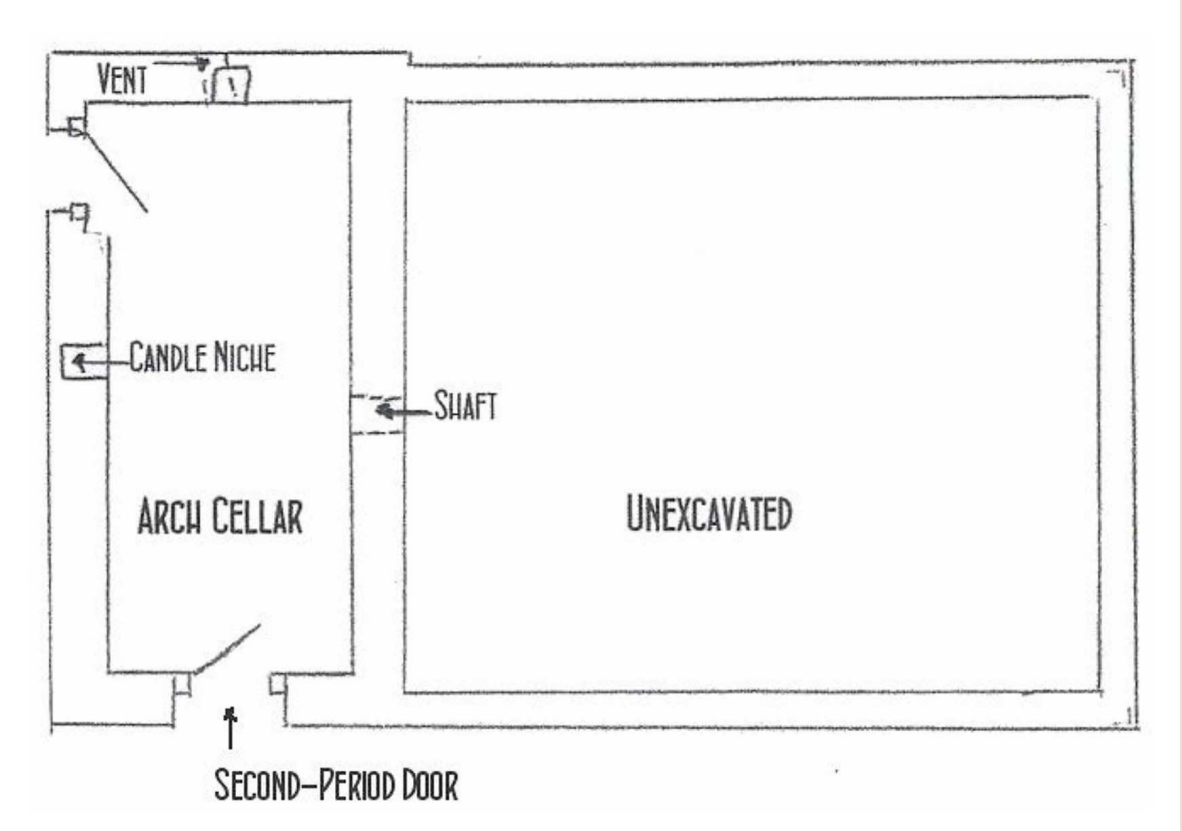
Although this central hallways is suggestive of the English central hallways of Pennsylvania's Georgian houses, this hallway's DNA is more Germanic than British. Architecture historians describe these houses as *durchgängiges Haus* (through-passage house). This floor plan has deep roots in Germany's rural architecture. Prototypes for Pennsylvania's *durchgängiges* floor plans are illustrated in German books as early as the 17th century.

The *Stube* (stove room) was heated by a five-plate stove fed from a small firepace in the central hallway. Beneath the stove room is a vaulted root cellar for food storage. This stove room also served as the *Kammer* (parents' bedroom).

The second floor's walls were heightened ca. 1813 to a full story from the original half-story height, using dove-tailed corner timbering. The original, hand-hewn rafters were reused, and a full attic was added, included a *Rauchenkammer* (smoke room) for smoking meats with smoke from the stovepipe. The house's renovations and additions occured ca. 1788, ca. 1813, ca. 1860, ca. 1941, and 1986.

Arch Cellar in the Log Farmhouse



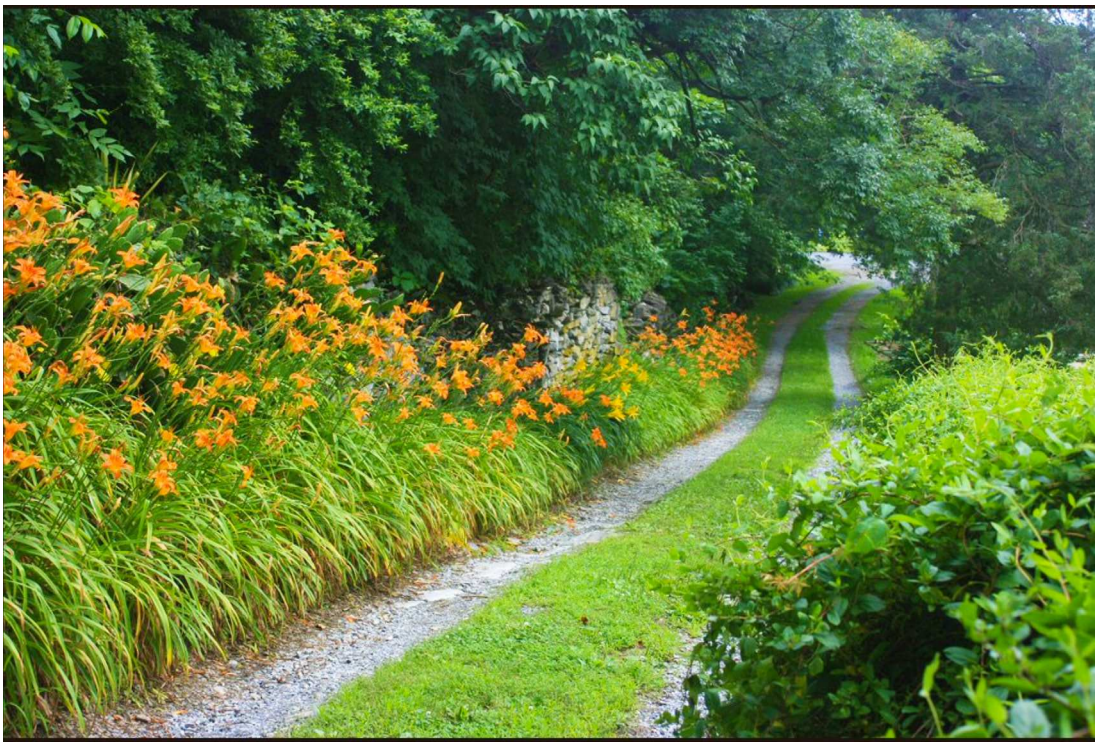


The Log Farmhouse Interior

The Bake Oven

Above: The reconstructed squirrel-tail bake oven with 18th-century, Pennsylvania German roof tiles.

During the restoration of the log farmhouse in the mid 1980s, Clarke Hess located the foundation of the original bake oven attached to the east side of the house. He also found numerous fragments of clay roof tile at that location, so he was able to accurately reconstruct that structure. All the roof tiles are 18th-century, except the single row of cap tiles which were made by potter Lester Breininger. The original bake oven was added to the house ca. 1788 during the house's first renovation. The oven was accessed inside the house, in the work room. The hole in the oven's base is for removing ashes from the ash dump.



Above: Wild daylilies (*Hemerocallis fulva*) line the driveway to the log farmhouse.

Above: 18th-century retaining wall beside the log farmhouse.

When the log farmhouse was constructed in the 1740s, the adjoining hillside was terraced to allow the house to be constructed near the slope. The hillside was faced with limestone walls. These beautifully-constructed walls remain an enduring feature of the homestead's landscape. This section of wall retains traces of white-wash.

The Summer Kitchen

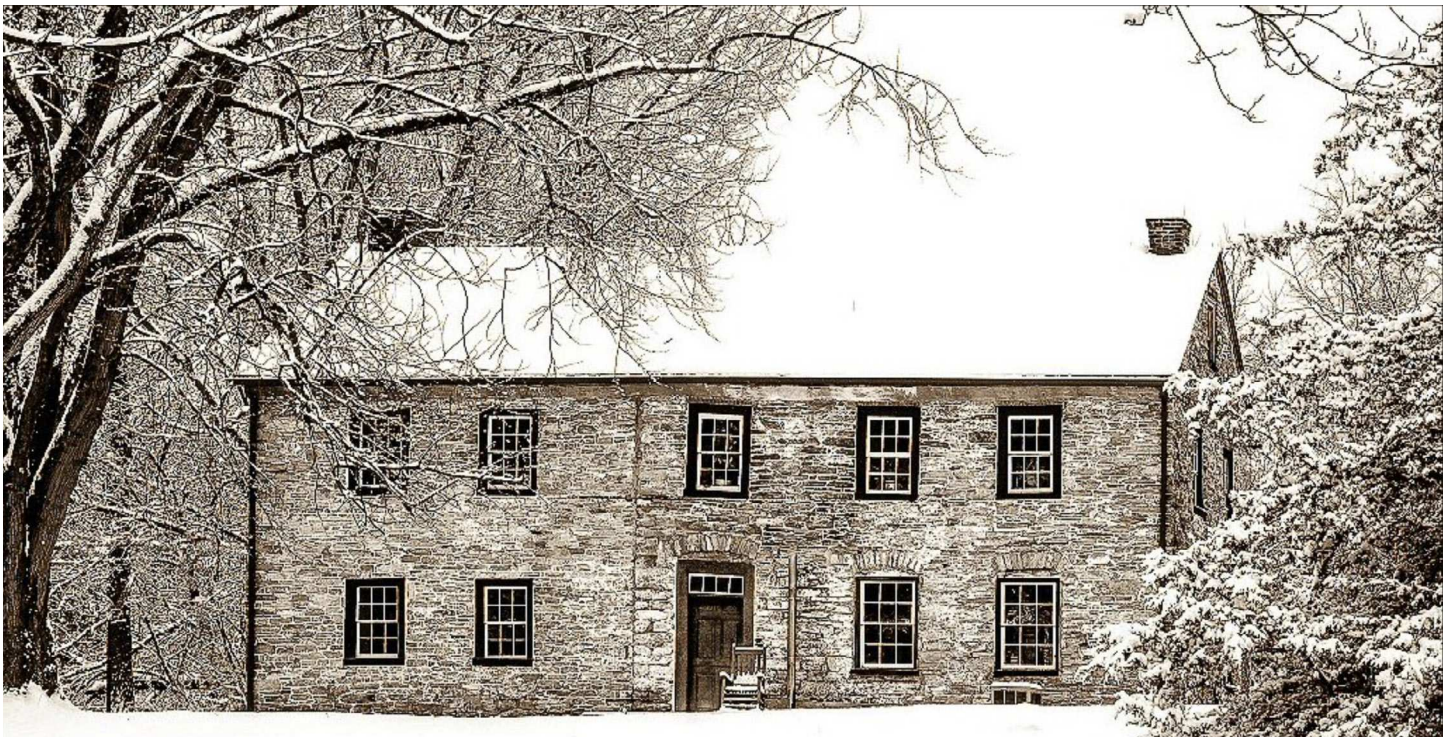
This frame building was built ca. 1850, adjoining the log farmhouse. Henry Hess (1794-1867) constructed the building over a vaulted root cellar, which is one of three arch cellars at this homestead. Included in the building is a walk-in fireplace, previously used for butchering, making soap, heating laundry water, etc.

A hand pump in the building was used for pumping water from an underground cistern, which stored rain water from the kitchen's roof. Outside the summer kitchen was a windmill to pump water from the well. A brick, squirrel-tail bake oven was located outside, attached to the fireplace.

Left: Behind the summer kitchen ca. 1910. An anonymous woman holds a treat for the St. Bernard.

The woman on left is Annie C. (Shenk) Hess (1881-1970). She is wit h her son Raymond S. Hess (1903-1988).

The Stone Farmhouse



The stone farmhouse is next door to the log farmhouse. The construction date 1778 is carved in the gable datestone, with the initials C. H. These initials are for Christian Hess (1757-1816), the great-grandson of immigrant Hans Hess.

Christian Hess and wife Anna farmed approximately 100 acres here. Christian also operated the Hess mill built by his father Johannes.

A vaulted arch cellar is beneath the kitchen. The kitchen retains its original hearth and mantle. The house was enlarged to its present form ca. 1800 by Christian's sister Elizabeth Hess (1776-1865) and her husband Mennonite deacon Daniel Burkholder (1770-1858).

Right: The 1778 datestone for Christian Hess. The front door with segmental arch. Second-floor window with brick lintel.

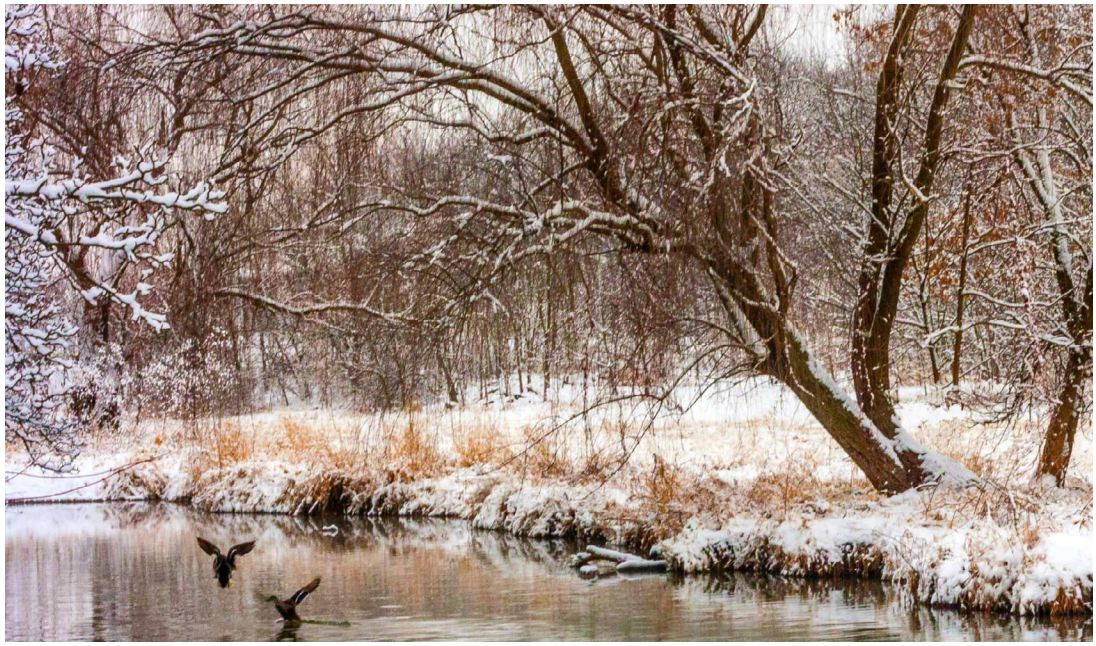
The 1885 Mill

This oil and hemp mill, located on Lititz Run Creek, was built by Johannes Hess ca. 1769, while he was living in the log farmhouse with wife Susanna. The mill produced flaxseed oil and hempseed oil until 1790, when it began operation as a gristmill to grind grain to flour.

A sawmill was added during this time, in an adjoining shed. The gristmill burned in an 1884 fire, but the stone first floor survived. One year later a frame mill was constructed on the mill's original stone walls, as it now stands.

Milling ceased ca. 1900, and the building was used as a pretzel bakery by the Sturgis family. During that same era, the mill was also used for storing whiskey distilled at the Rome Distillery, located a short distance upstream. The mill was later used as a tobacco warehouse.

Right, and opposite page: Site of the former millpond on Lititz Run Creek.

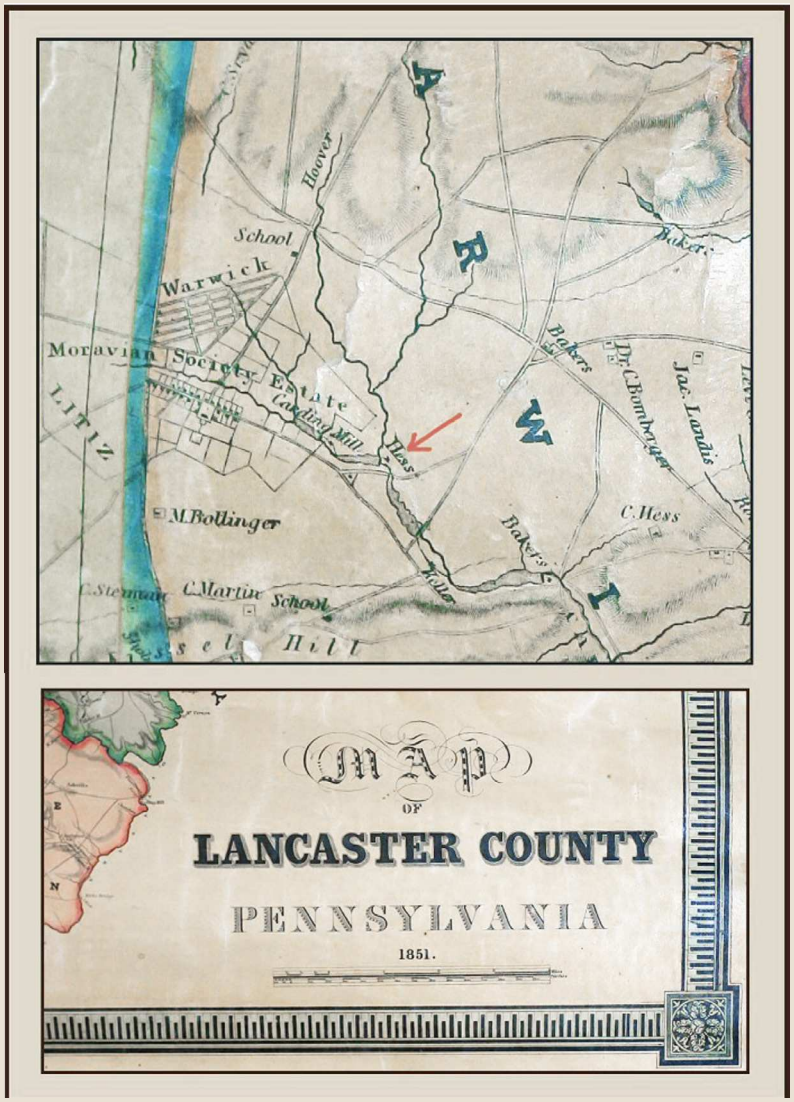


Timeline of the Mill's History

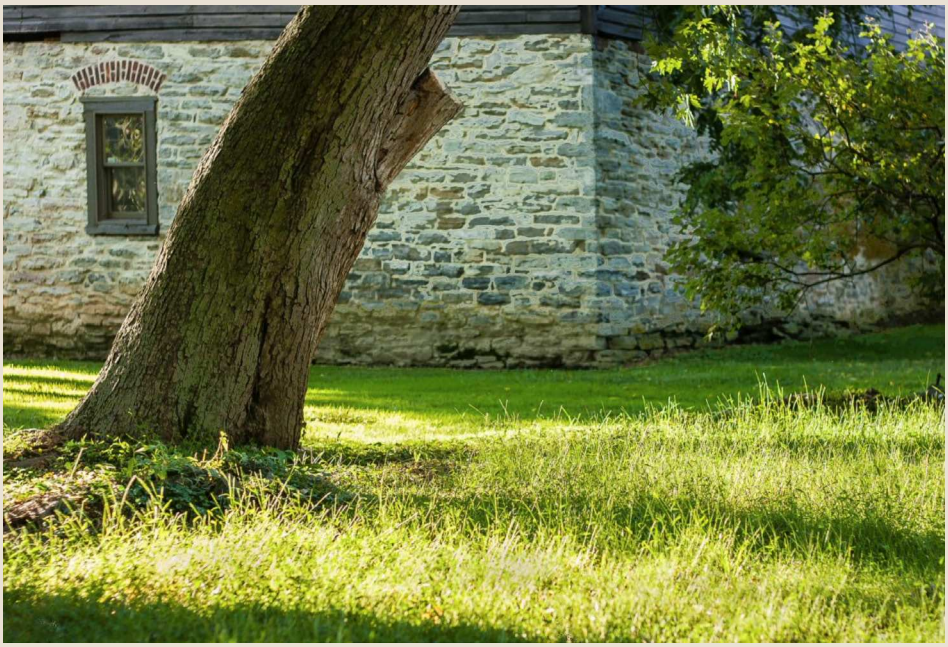
- **1730:** Hans Herr and Martin Kendig survey 200 acres in Warwick Township for the use of John [Hans] Hess (died 1733).
- **1735:** Jacob Hess (ca. 1706-1741) receives a patent from the Penn for 200 acres in Warwick Township. This land had been surveyed to his father Hans Hess.
- **1761:** The heirs of Jacob Hess deed 200 acres to his eldest son Johannes (John) Hess (ca. 1728-1778).
- c. 1769: Johannes Hess constructs a stone hempmill along the Lititz Run. Hemp plants were crushed using a large conical millstone, in order to extract their fibers for making rope and for weaving. The seeds were crushed to produce an oil used in paint and ink.
- **1778:** Johannes Hess dies without a will. His inventory includes money that was due from "the young womans at Lititz". Apparently he was supplying the Moravian sisters with either oil or hemp, etc.
- **1780:** Susanna (Landis) Hess, Johannes' widow, is taxed for "an oyl and hemp mill."
- **1784:** The heirs of Johannes Hess deed 178 acres, including the mill, to the eldest son Christian Hess (1757-1816).
- **1790:** Christian Hess advertises that his grist mill is in operation with new machinery. Apparently the mill was converted from milling hemp to milling grain in the late 1780s. A sawmill was also added about this time. The sawmill would have been located in a separate, shed-like structure.
- **1792:** Christian Hess sells a four-acre tract, including the "grist, merchant, and saw mill" to his younger brother, Rev. John Hess (1768-1830), and Christian's brother-in-law Martin Metzler (1767-1807) for 900 pounds. The deed gives them the right "with privilege of damming and swelling the water so high and so far into the said Christian Hess' other land as the same as now and has been occupied here fore and no higher."
- **1794:** John and Esther Hess sell their half interest in the mill to miller Martin Metzler for 700 pounds. They sell an additional 7.75 acres of land to Metzler for 245 pounds and 16 shillings.
- **1807:** Death of the miller Martin Metzler
- By 1809: The mill has been purchased by Erhart Yeager.
- **1813:** Ehrhart Yeager sues John Keller, the owner of the Compass Mill. The mill was located a half mile downstream. Keller had raised the height of his mill's dam, causing water to back into the tailrace at Yeager's mill. The court orders Keller to bear half the expense for "removing the mud and moss out of the channel of the creek". Keller was also ordered to pay Yeager $60.
- **1829:** Ehrhart Yeager dies without a will.

- **1840s:** The mill is owned by Jacob Hess (1815-1850). Jacob operates the mill, and lives in the two-story, brick house across the street.
- **1850:** Jacob Hess dies. His widow, Ann (Becker) Hess, and two children, Elias and Susanna, occupy the property.
- **1853:** Heirs of Jacob Hess, deceased, insure the mill property with the Northern Mutual Insurance Company. The mill is described as "two story grist mill and merchant mill 31 by 37 feet, with tow run of stones, has one chimney and one stove, is about 40 yards from the house."
- **1860:** Jacob Hess' daughter Susanna (Hess) Franck (1839-1899) wife of Henry S. Franck, acquires the mill.
- **1866:** Henry S. and Susanna B. Franck sell seven acres and 22 perches, including tenement and stone gristmill to Daniel D. Burkholder and Abraham Bruckhart for $1, 960. Burkholder owns the nearby distillery, located upstream from the mill.
- **1867:** Burkholder sells his half interest in the mill property to Bruckhart for $2,200.
- **1868:** Abraham N. and Elizabeth Bruckhart sell the mill property to Christian Habecker for $7,000.
- **1869:** Christian and Mary Habecker sell the property to Jacob Dohner for $7,150.
- **1877:** Cyrus R. and Benjamin R. Dohner, administrators of Jacob Dohner, deceased, sell the mill property to Daniel B. Huber of Manheim Township for $7,300.
- **1884:** The mill burns in a fire. The first floor survives. A new frame mill is constructed on the original stone walls in 1885.
- **1885:** David B. and Caroline Huber, of Manheim Township, sell the mill to Abram B. Huber of Manheim Township for $4,600. They keep ca. five acres of land. Abraham Huber rebuilds the mill.
- **1885 - ca. 1900:** The mill is operated by John K. Huber, son of Abraham B. Huber of Neffsville. The milling operation ceases about 1900.
- **1903:** Abram B. and Esther Huber, of Manheim Township, sell the mill to John K. Huber of Warwick Township for $5,000.
- **1905:** Lizzie B. Huber, administrator of John K. Huber, deceased, sells the mill for $3,000.
- ca. 1902 - 1910: Sturgis family operates a pretzel bakery at the mill. During this era, the mill is also used for storing whiskey distilled at the adjoining Rome Distillery, located upstream.
- **1923:** John C. Horting deeds the mill property to Helen Brobst Grosh of Lititz. The same year, Grosh also buys the adjoining Hess farm, site of the log farmhouse.
- **1939:** Benjamin F. Grosh and Helen Brobst Grosh deed .245 containing a three-and-a-half-story tobacco warehouse of stone and frame, to Charles B. and Martha Wisner for $1.00.
- **1944:** Charles B. and Martha H. Wisner deed two tracts, including a brick house, frame bungalow, and a two-and-a-half-story tobacco warehouse to Ethel M. Landis of East Hempfield Township for $1.00.
- The mill is later owned by Adam Newswanger, and later by Larry and Cheryl McCowan.

Left: ca. 1900 photo of the mill and the log farmstead. This photo shows the log farmhouse's story-and-a-half addition which was built ca. 1830 and demolished ca. 1909.

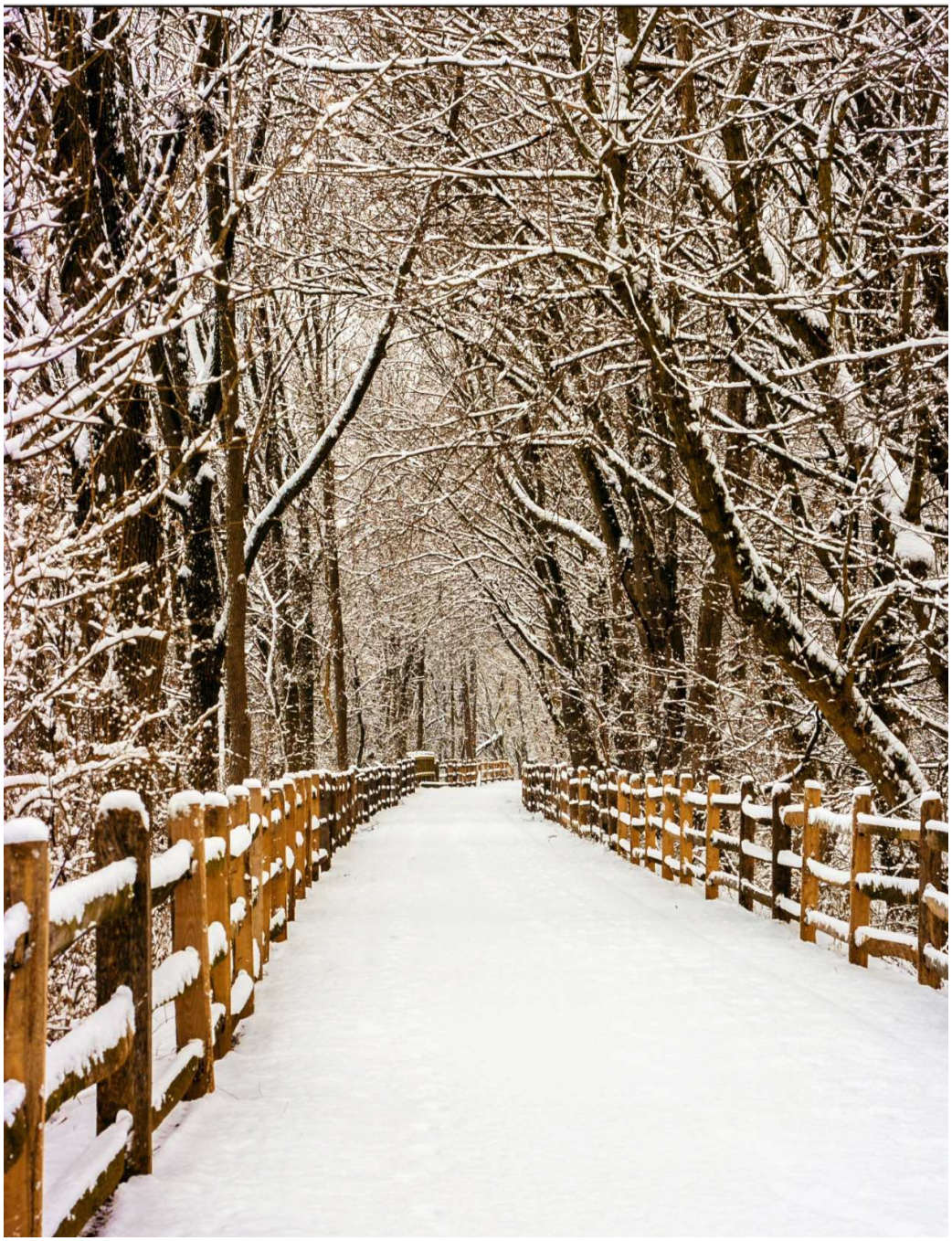


Above: The Hess Mill in an 1851 Lancaster County map
Below: The mill's original first floor, with brick segmental arches over the windows.

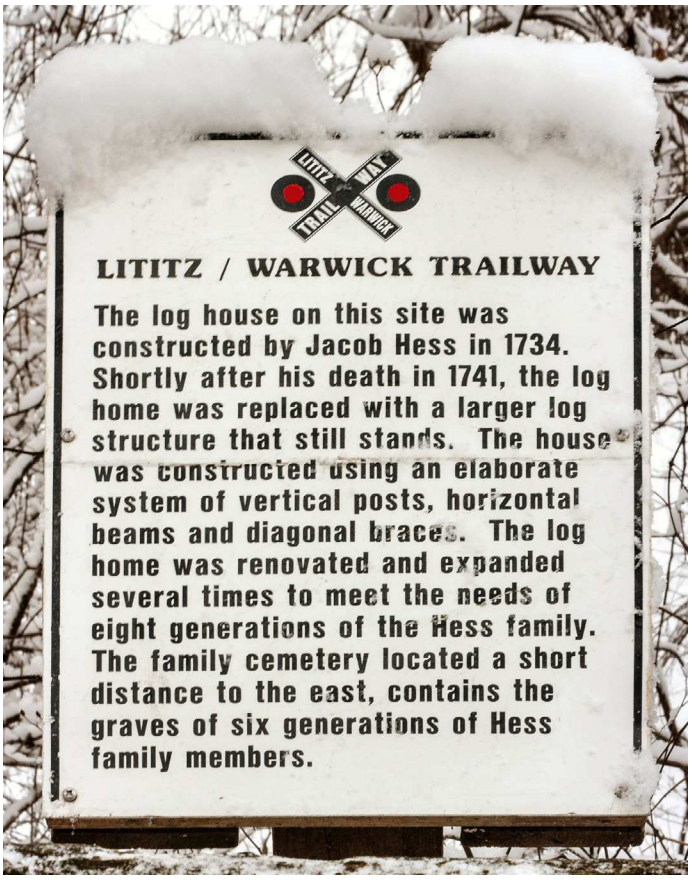


The Historical Markers

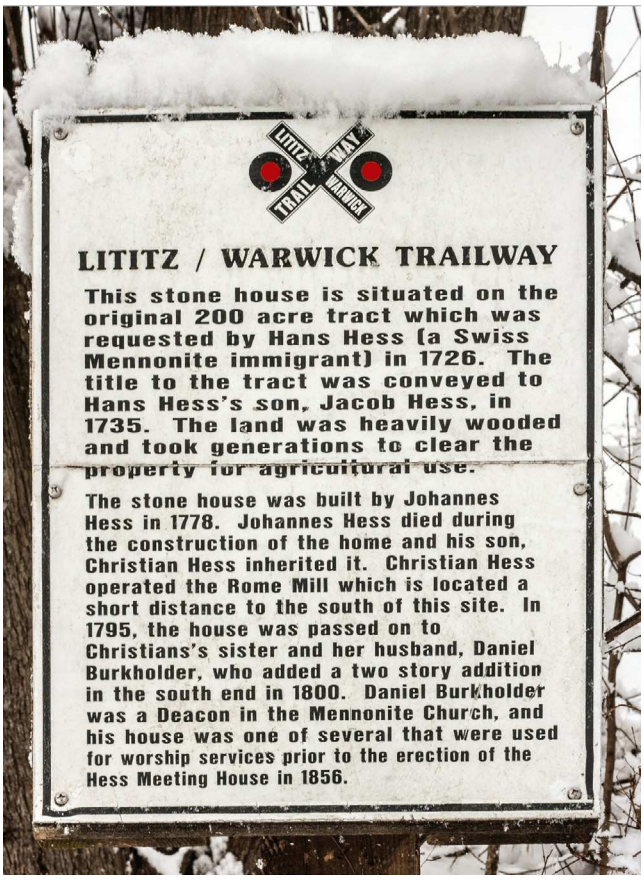
In 1999 Warwick Township officials installed historical markers for the log farmhouse and for the stone farmhouse. The signs are located on a walking trail that adjoins the farmhouses. This trail is the site of the former Reading Railroad line.



Above: The historical markers are located here along the Lititz / Warwick Trailway. It is a recreational rail trail that is used for hiking and biking.


LITITZ / WARWICK TRAILWAY
The log house on this site was constructed by Jacob Hess in 1734. Shortly after his death in 1741, the log home was replaced with a larger log structure that still stands. The house was constructed using an elaborate system of vertical posts, horizontal beams and diagonal braces. The log home was renovated and expanded several times to meet the needs of eight generations of the Hess family. The family cemetery located a short distance to the east, contains the graves of six generations of Hess family members.

Above: Historical marker for the log farmhouse.


LITITZ / WARWICK TRAILWAY
This stone house is situated on the original 200 acre tract which was requested by Hans Hess (a Swiss Mennonite immigrant) in 1726. The title to the tract was conveyed to Hans Hess's son, Jacob Hess, in 1735. The land was heavily wooded and took generations to clear the property for agricultural use.
The stone house was built by Johannes Hess in 1778. Johannes Hess died during the construction of the home and his son, Christian Hess inherited it. Christian Hess operated the Rome Mill which is located a short distance to the south of this site. In 1795, the house was passed on to Christians's sister and her husband, Daniel Burkholder, who added a two story addition in the south end in 1800. Daniel Burkholder was a Deacon in the Mennonite Church, and his house was one of several that were used for worship services prior to the erection of the Hess Meeting House in 1856.

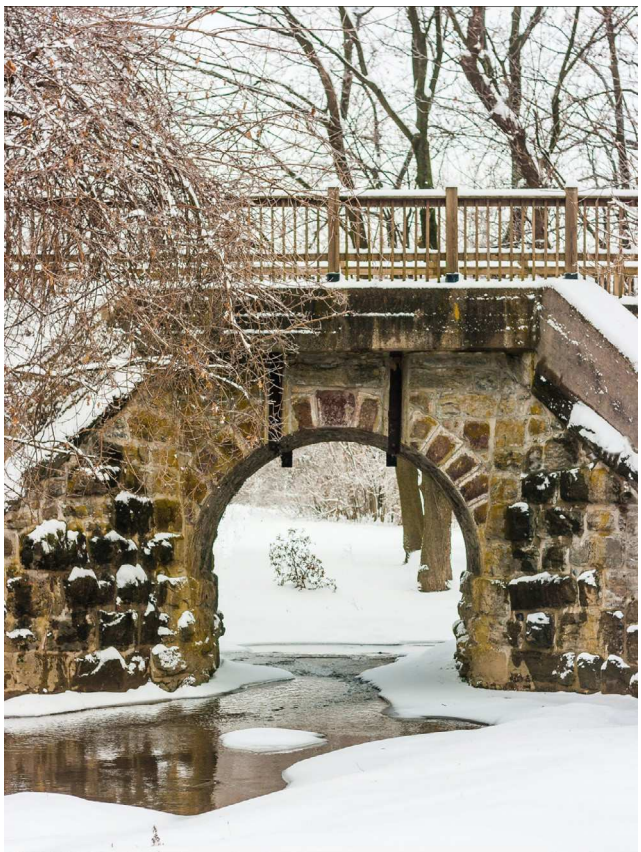
Above: Historical marker for the stone farmhouse.

Train Engine Sparks Burn Down the Barn

In 1922 the barn behind the log farmhouse burned to the ground. An eyewitness had seen sparks from a Reading Railroad train engine land on the barn roof. The barn was built in 1849, which was 12 years before the railroad line was laid.

An article in the *Lititz Record* newspaper, dated October 19, 1922, presents detailed description of the barn and its contents:

"*The barn was 57 by 84 feet, built of stone. There was a frame attachment 20 by 57 feet, besides a frame tobacco shed and wagon shed attached, pig sty and carriage house. The contents destroyed consisted of five acres of tobacco, 30 tons of hay, 20 tons of straw, 30 bushels of wheat, 75 bushels of corn, and farming implements.*"

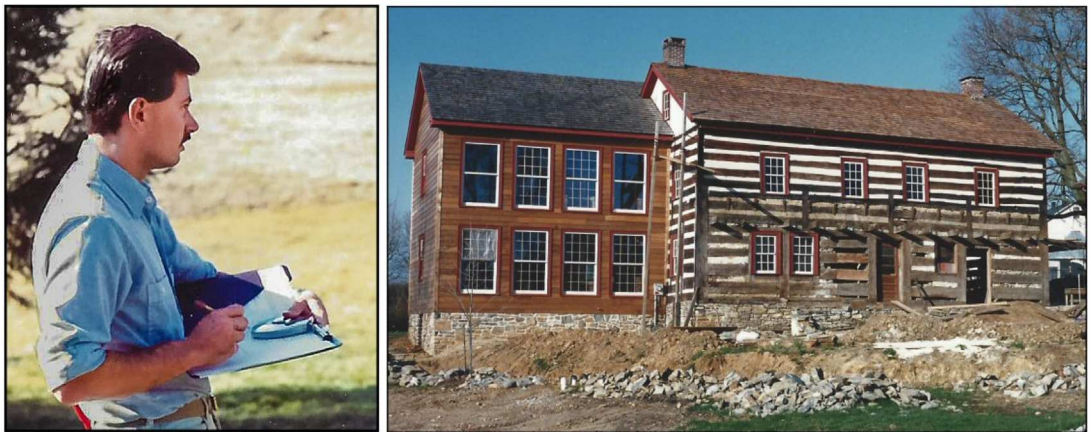


Right: The 1861 Reading Railroad bridge near the stone farmhouse.

Hess Homestead Restoration

Beginning in 1985, the log farmhouse and stone farmhouse were purchased and restored by Clarke Hess, a great-great-great-great-great-great-great grandson of the immigrants Hans and Magdalena Hess.

Clarke also relocated several historic outbuildings to the homestead. Those outbuildings had been threatened with demolition at their previous sites, including a stone spring house, a pigsty with hand-hewn timbers, and a ca. 1785 Germanic log cabin with an interior squirrel-tail bake oven.



Clarke Hess during restoration and renovation of log farmhouse, 1985 to 1987.

Rescuing a Spring House for the Homestead

Above: Moving the 1829 spring house from the Bucher farm to the Hess farm in 1989.
Spring house datestone: JB1829: Built by Jonas Bucher in 1829.

This spring house has a datestone located to the left of the door. The datestone is inscribed "JB 1829" for Jonas Bucher, a great-great-great-great grandfather of Clarke Hess. The spring house was threatened with demolition at the nearby Bucher farm, so Clarke relocated the building intact to the Hess Homestead, to the site of a previous spring house which had been demolished by a previous owner.

The ca. 1785 Log House

Above: A ca. 1785 *Flürkuchenhaus.* Formerly used as a Civil War field hospital near Hanover, PA.

This log house was rescued, disassembled, and relocated to the homestead in the 1990s. It previously was located west of Hanover in York County. At that Hanover location the house had served as a Civil War field hospital after the Battle of Gettysburg. The structure's original doorway (on the reverse side of this view) opens from the hillside into the kitchen.

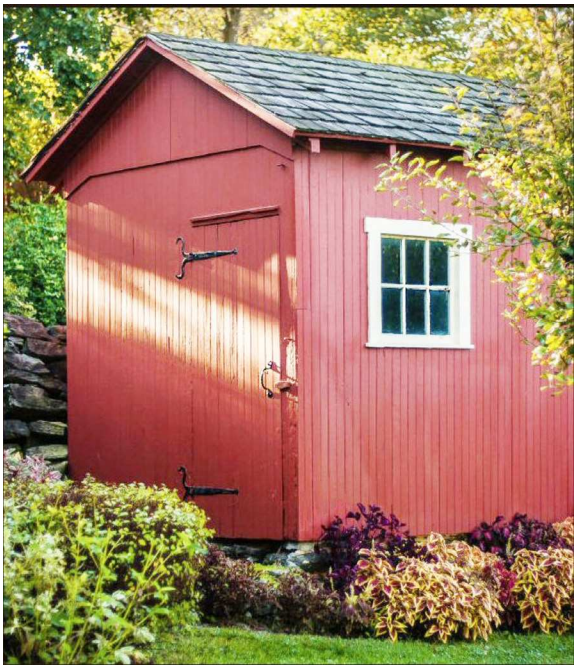
The house's cooking fireplace has been rebuilt, along with its interior squirrel-tail bake oven. The building's three-room floor plan is typical of numerous early Pennsylvania houses known as Continental German houses, or a *Flürkuchenhaus* (hallway-kitchen house). A central chimney is characteristic of this form. Some of the region's best-known early houses have a similar *Flürkuchenhaus* floor plan, including the 1719 Hans Herr House and the 1752 Miller's House at Millbach.

Other Outbuildings

Above: Rescue and relocation: Moving a historic pigsty having hand-hewn timbers to the log farmhouse in 1988. Rescued and relocated intact from Schaefferstown, PA.

This spring house was built on part of the foundation of a retirement house built by Preacher John Hess and wife Esther (Hershey) Hess. They had lived in the log farmhouse until their retirement in 1815.

The retirement house had a spring in the basement. That house was demolished in the 1930s, but a portion of the basement remained, with its spring. So this small structure was built to protect that water source.

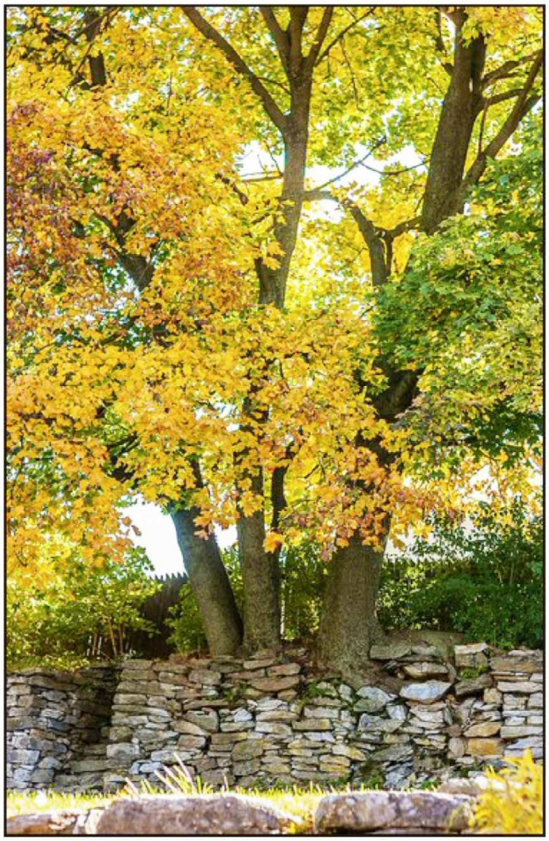


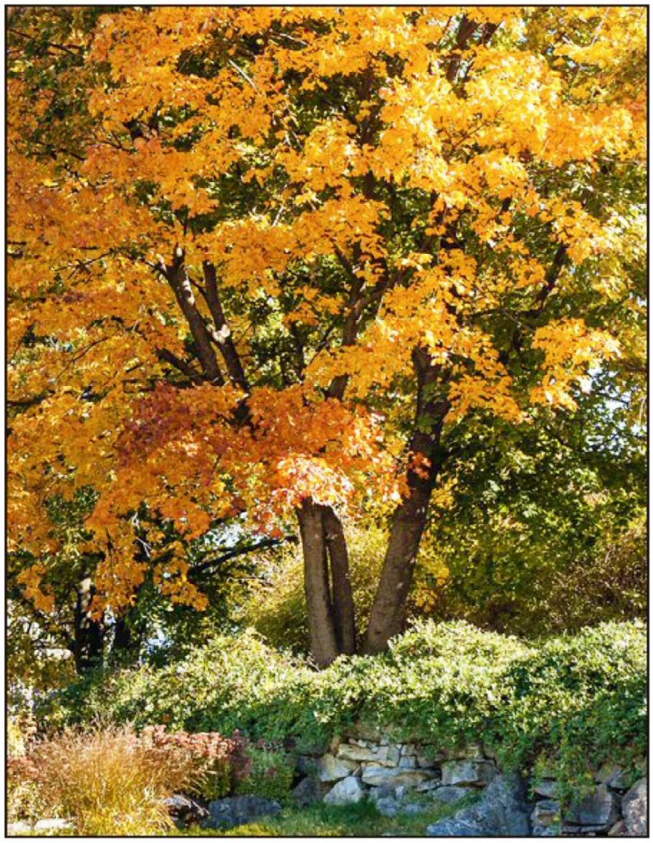
Above: A 1930s spring house at the end of the log farmhouse's driveway. The tool shed. Part of its stone foundation is for an earlier structure, probably a former smokehouse.

Gardens and Grounds

I created this garden in the 1980s during the homestead restoration. The garden is a modern suggestion of the homestead's earlier garden. The original garden would have been much larger than this example, and would have been designed primarily for food production rather than for aesthetics.

Many Pennsylvania German gardens had raised beds, which were sometimes edged with boards. Yucca filamentosa was a traditional plant for the garden's center. We hand split the fence pickets from oak logs with a froe and a mallet.





Above: Maples on 18th-century retaining walls, beside the log farmhouse.

Above: 18th-century retaining wall, with traces of whitewash on the wall.

Artifacts and Sherds Found at the Hess Homestead
Excavated from the Soil during Restoration in the 1980s

Left: Ceramic Sherds: British Imported Tableware

Ceramic sherds of British imported tableware from ca. 1800 to 1860s. Clockwise from uppper left: Spatterware peafowl saucer, stick spatterware cup, rainbow spatterware saucer, yellow spatterware sugar bowl, pearlware cup, Leeds cup, King's Rose plate, mochaware earthworm pieces, yellow Leeds cup, blue-edge saucer. In the center is blue-and-green striped mochaware and historic blue transferware.

The sherds are in a British blue-edge platter owned by Jonas and Annie (Franck) Hess while living in the log farmhouse from 1862 to 1910. Jonas was born in the house. The platter was not excavated.

Pre-Woodland Indian artifacts, including quartz arrowheads and spearheads, a drill (upper right), and a hide scraper (lower row, second from left). **Excavated Iron:** Hand-wrought iron and a bone-handled steel knife. Iron includes (clockwise from top): ca. 1800-1850 swamp axe for cleaning irrigation ditches, a hoe head, thumb piece for thumb latch, pot hook, spatula, spoon, two parts of a thumb latch, meat hook, and a pintle for a strap hinge.

Left: American Redware Sherds

Pennsylvania redware sherds ca. 1750 to 1820. Largest sherd is a fragment of a slip-decorated pie plate. Also shown: a clay pipe bowl, a fragment of a grooved roof tile from the log farmhouse's bake oven (bottom center), plus tableware and bakingware. All the sherds shown here are slip-decorated except the roof tile.

The platter (not excavated) is a ca. 1860 British ironstone platter in a wheat pattern. It was used at the Hess Homestead by Henry F. and Annie (Shenk) Hess for their Thanksgiving turkey. They lived in the log farmhouse from 1909 to 1920. The platter was also used by an earlier generation.

Right: British and American Coins

British and American Coins: Left to right: **Row 1:** 1755 George II British halfpenny, next two coins: ca. 1770s George III halfpennies, 1788 Connecticut penny. **Row 2:** ca. 1788 Connecticut penny, mid-1790s U. S. large cent, 1804 U. S. half cent, 1812 U. S. large cent. **Row 3:** ca. 1840s U. S. large cent, 1879 Indian Head cent, 1905 Indian Head cent, Unidentified, ca. 1910 Washington D. C. trolley token.

Fragments of Stiegel Glass from Manheim, Lancaster County:

Glass fragments of a painted flip glass in a bird pattern, ca. 1770s, from the Stiegel glassworks in Manheim, Lancaster County. Found under the front porch of the log farmhouse. (The intact glass shown here was purchased at auction, and was not excavated.)

Buttons, Buckles, and a Bone-Handled Knife:

Various buttons, mostly pewter. The large button, upper left, is from George Washington's inauguration. Beside it is a small 18th-century brass button with a star. Collection also includes bone buttons and glass buttons. The buckles include shoe buckles.

A 1755 Stove Plate:

Fragments of a side plate of a five-plate stove cast in 1755 by Jacob Huber, ironmaster at Elizabeth Furnace near Brickerville, Lancaster County. The stove was probably used in the log house's *Stube* (living room). The fragments were found in the soil at the site of the present-day garden.

The complete stove plate shown above is identical to the fragments in date and design, and is also from Elizabeth Furnace. This intact plate was not found at the homestead, though, but was purchased at auction. This complete plate is a right-side plate, while the fragments are for a left-side plate.

A Spitball Shooter Hidden in a Loft:

This homemade spitball shooter was found in the loft of the summer kitchen during the 1980s restoration of that building. The shooter was hidden behind a window casing.

Teacup Archaeology:
Ceramic Sherds Found in the Soil at the Hess Homestead.

And a Collection of the Sherds' Corresponding Patterns:

Spatterware peafowl pattern, ca. 1840. The fragments are from a cup in this pattern.

During the 1980s Clarke Hess recovered several thousand pottery fragments in the soil at the Hess Homestead, while restoring the property. The sherds consist primarily of Pennsylvania redware and British imported ceramics.

The British ceramics span the period 1780 to 1860, with the bulk of the fragments dating from 1820 to 1850. Clarke identified 103 patterns or variants among the fragments large enough to identify. Of those patterns, 36 are examples of pearlware and creamware, 15 patterns are variants of green, feather-edged Leeds, 10 are variants of blue, feather-edged Leeds, 13 are spatterware patterns, 10 are transfer-printed patterns, nine are mochaware patterns, seven are stick-spatter patterns, and there is one decorated ironstone.

59 Patterns of Antique Cups and Saucers Found in the Hess Homestead Soil:

Clarke found 59 patterns of cups and / or saucers among the sherds. This remarkable number of cups suggests that there were countless numbers of cup-and-saucer patterns used here at the Hess Homestead throughout these generations. The manufacture dates of all these cups range with 50 years, from 1800 to 1850.

What explains the huge number of broken cups and saucers (59 patterns) found in the soil here at the Hess Homestead? Mennonite church services were held here in the 1700s and 1800s, so all these broken cups and saucers might suggest that these cups were used for serving refreshments after the church services.

Other pottery forms found here include 33 plates, mostly cup plates or dessert-size plates, three waste bowls, two serving bowls, two cream pitchers, two mugs, one sugar bowl, and one child's cup. After analyzing the sherds, Clarke purchased intact examples of some of the patterns represented by these fragments found at the Homestead.

Above: Spatterware peafowl pattern, ca.1840.

Above: Spatterware peafowl pattern, ca. 1840.

Books and Manuscripts
Owned by Previous Hesses who Lived in the Log Farmhouse

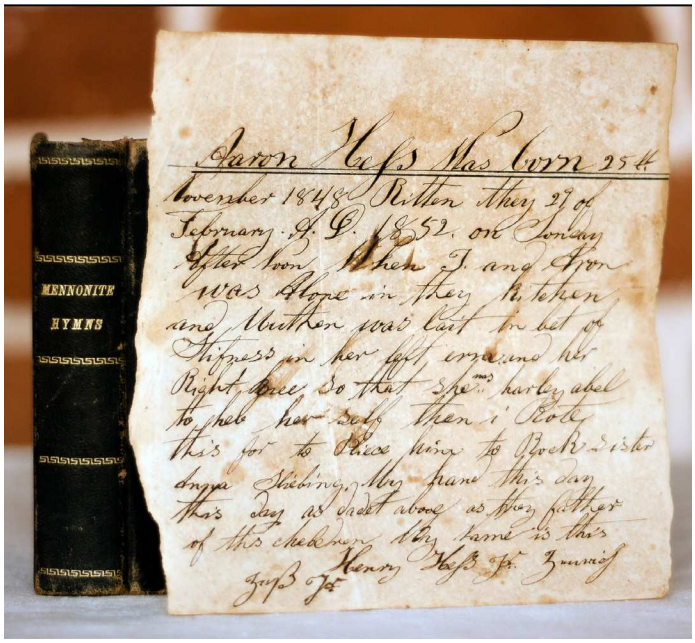
Rocking Annie's Cradle:
1852 Note from Henry Hess to his son Aaron:

This note was penned in 1852 note by Henry Hess Jr. (1821-1908) who was born in the log farmhouse.

Henry wrote the note for his three-year-old son Aaron who was rocking the cradle of Aaron's baby sister Anna, while the mother was sick in bed.

Note's text:

Aaron Hess was born 25th November 1848. Rit-ten they (Written the) 29 of February A. D. 1852 on Sunday After Noon When I and Aaron was Alone in they Kitchen and Muther was lait in bet (laid in bed) of Stifness in her left erm and her Right Knee So that she was harley (hardly) abel to heb (help) her self then I Rote (wrote) this for to Pliece him to Rock Sister Anna Slebing (sleeping). My hand this day this day as dadet (dated) above as they father of ths cheldren (this children). My name is this Henry Hess Jr. Henrich Hess Jr.



The Mennonite hymnbook has an ownership inscription of this Henry Hess Jr. The book, *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns*, was published in 1894 in Elkhart, Indiana, by the Mennonite Publishing Company.

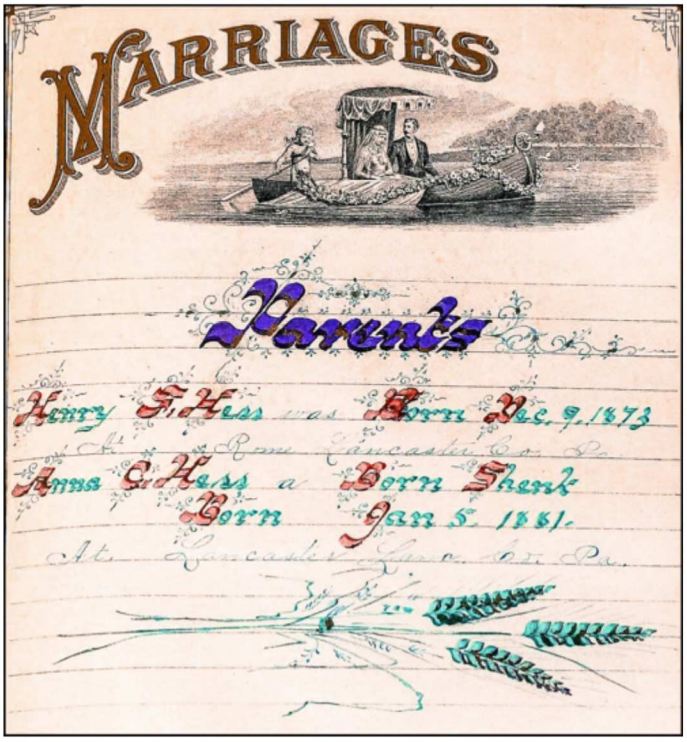
Marriage Record for Henry F. and Anna C. Hess.

Henry was born in the log farmhouse, and is a first cousin to Clarke Hess' great grandfather. The family records are in a Philadelphia Bible given to six-year-old Annie C. Shenk in 1887 from her grandfather John Shenk. Anna later became Mrs. Henry F. Hess, and they lived in the log farmhouse.

In the fall of 1921, Anna and Henry moved from the Hess Homestead to the Shenk farm in Lancaster Township that became today's Conestoga House and Gardens.

Anna and Henry, with their son Raymond, were the last Hesses to live at the Hess Homestead, until Clarke Hess purchased the property in 1985.

Annie's grandfather John Shenk and her father Benjamin Shenk had owned that Shenk farm, which was purchased by Hale and Louise Steinman in 1927 to become the Conestoga House.



1785 *Ausbund* with Ownership Inscription of Preacher John Hess:

Ausbund,
Das ist
Etliche schöne
Christliche
Lieder,

1785 *Ausbund* shown on the sewing stand above. It's a Mennonite and Amish hymnbook printed in Germantown, PA, with German-script inscription on the flyleaf: "This book belongs to me Johannes Hess. I have bought it from Christian Eby for 7 shillings and 7 pence." Preacher John Hess (1768-1830) lived in the log farmhouse with wife Esther (Hershey) Hess (1769-1824).

Three Hess Homestead Books on Annie Hess' Sewing Stand (Another Annie)

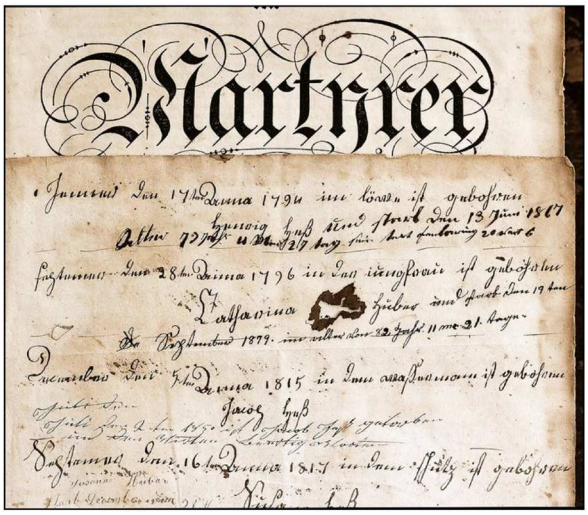
Left: Books: (Top to bottom): Top book: 1785 *Ausbund* printed in Germantown, PA, with ownership inscription of Preacher John Hess (1768-1830). He lived in the log farmhouse until 1815, when he built a retirement house at the end of the driveway. Only part of that retirement house survived into the 1930s, when it was converted into a spring house.

Center book: German-language Bible printed in Philadelphia, owned by Anna H. Hess who married John S. Franck. With manuscript family records of Henry and Catherine (Huber) Hess and family records of Christian and Catherine (Snyder) Franck. Anna Hess was born in the log farmhouse in 1839.

Bottom book: 1814 *Martyrs' Mirror* printed in Lancaster, with German-script family records of Henry Hess Sr. and Catherine (Huber) Hess. Henry was born in the log farmhouse in 1794, and died there in 1867. Catherine and Henry married in 1814, and lived in the log farmhouse until her death in 1879.

The sewing stand was brought to the log farmhouse by Annie Franck in 1862, when she married Jonas H. Hess. Before Annie married she lived nearby at Kissel Hill.

Hess Family Records in a *Martyrs' Mirror:*


Marterer

Detail of *Martyrs' Mirror* book shown above on the sewing stand. The German-script family records are for Henry Hess and Catherine (Huber) Hess. Henry was born in the log farmhouse in 1794, and died there in 1867. Catherine and Henry married in 1814, and lived in the log farmhouse until her death in 1879.

Objects Owned by Previous Hesses who Lived in the Log Farmhouse

Father and Son's Grain-Bag Markers:

Grain-bag stamp carved ca. 1810 for John Hess (1791-1831). John was born in the log farmhouse, and married Elizabeth Risser. Farmers marked their grain bags to identify them at the grist mill, where they took grain to be ground to flour. (The carver of this bag stamp carved the letter "s" incorrectly: the "s" letters are backwards.) Bottom: Grain-bag stencil for John's son Jacob Risser Hess (1816-1877), cut from a tin sheet.

17-Year-Old Anna Hess Makes a Sampler in the Log Farmhouse in 1855:

Needlework sampler stitched with wool thread by Anna H. Hess, born 1839 in the log farmhouse. She was the daughter of Henry Hess Sr. and Catherine (Huber) Hess.

Annie Hess' Textiles and Sewing Stand:

Annie (Franck) Hess' homespun white linen which she marked with her initials, before she married. She probably spun the thread for this linen while living with her parents at Kissel Hill, before moving to the Hess Homestead. The blue cotton fabric is Annie's neck kerchief. The textiles are photographed on her sewing stand.

American Glassware Owned by the Two Hesses Named Annie: (Mother and Daughter-in-Law):

The first Annie was Annie Franck who married Jonas Hess. The second Annie was Annie Shenk who married Jonas' son Henry F Hess. Objects are:

- ca. 1830 blown-glass decanter from a wine set, owned by Annie and Henry.
- ca. 1850 molded-and-blown water pitcher owned by Annie and Henry.
- ca. 1820 mold-blown wine glass owned by Annie and Henry.
- ca. 1860 water goblet owned by Annie and Jonas

British and French Tableware Owned by the Two Hesses Named Annie (Mother and Daughter-in-Law):

Dishes used in the Log House
From the 1830s to 1920

Annie and Annie's dishes
(They were mother and daughter-in-law.)

Top row, from left:

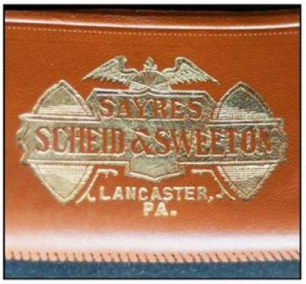
- ca. 1830 Staffordshire transferware saucer with a hunting scene. Owned by Annie and Henry.
- ca. 1840 Staffordshire transfer-print dinner plate. Owned by Annie and Henry.
- ca. 1850 decorated ironstone saucer. Owned by Annie and Jonas
-

Second row, from left:

- ca. 1860 tea-leaf ironstone plate. Owned by Annie and Jonas. Their wedding china.
- ca. 1860 Staffordshire flow blue plate owned. Owned by Annie and Henry.
- ca 1910 French Limoges plate from a 12-place service. Owned by Annie and Henry. Their wedding china.

Raymond S. Hess' Plain (but Fancy) Black Hat:

Hat and hatbox owned by Raymond S. Hess who lived in the log farmhouse as a young man in the early 20th century. The hatband is stamped with Raymond's initials, and has the logo of Lancaster clothier Sayres, Scheid and Sweeton.



Plain Bonnets of Raymond's Mother: Annie C. Hess:

Four bonnets owned by Annie C. (Shenk) Hess, who lived in the log farmhouse in the early 20th century. The brown and gray sunbonnets apparently date to the late 1800s.

Timeline of Deeds for the Hess Homestead

- **1726**: Hans Hess (ca. 1683-1733) requests land from the sons of William Penn for the use of his son Jacob Hess (ca. 1706-1741). The land adjoins property owned by Hans Ulrich (Huber).
- **1730:** 200 acres in Warwick Township warranted to Martin Kundig (Kindig) and John Herr.
- **1735:** September 24. Jacob Hess receives patent for 200 acres from the sons of William Penn.
- **1741:** February or March. Jacob Hess dies without a will. The land remains in the possession of his estate until 1761.
- **1747:** October 17. Michael Hess, Jacob's brother, has 27.5 acres in Warwick Township surveyed for the use of Jacob's children. (That property is located near the intersection of Clay Road and Newport Road.)
- **1761:** December 15. Heirs of Jacob Hess deed two tracts, being 200 acres and 27.5 acres, to the eldest son John Hess (ca. 1728-1778). Lancaster Court House Deed G-346 and M-417.
- **1761:** December 15. John and Susanna Hess deed two tracts, being 27.5 acres and 85.5 acres, to John's younger brother Christian Hess. The 85.5-acres tract was the eastern portion of the 200-acre tract, and included the log farmhouse. Lancaster Court House Deed N-30 and M-418.
- **1762:** September 22. John Hess receives a second patent on his father's 200-acre patent. His father had died as an unnaturalized immigrant in 1741, so he could not legally have transferred real estate. John was safeguarding his title to the property. Patent Book AA Vol. 5 p. 47.
- **1768:** March 9. Christian and Elizabeth Hess deed two tracts of 85.5 acres and 27.5 acres in Warwick Township to blacksmith Michael Shallenberger of Earl Township, Lancaster County. Lancaster Court House Deed 0-22.
- **1775:** May 6. Michael Shallenberger deeds one tract of 54.5 acres in Warwick Township to John Hess, including the log farmhouse.
- **1778:** John Hess dies without a will.
- **1784:** October 16. Heirs of John Hess deed 278 acres in Warwick Township to the eldest son, Christian Hess, including 178 acres of the original Hess patent and the "oyl and hemp mill". Lancaster Court House Deed KK392.
- **1790:** February 13. Christian and Anna Hess deed 96.25 acres in Warwick Township to Christian's younger brother John Hess. This is the eastern portion of the original 200-acre patent, including the log farmhouse. Lancaster Court House Deed KK395.
- **1823:** October 2. John and Esther Hess deed several tracts in Warwick Township to their son Henry Hess, including the log farmhouse. This deed was apparently never recorded but is cited in a later deed.
- **1864:** September 6. Henry and Catharine Hess deed to Jonas H. Hess, their youngest son, 137 acres in Warwick Township. The deed includes lengthy provisions for rights of Henry and Catharine concerning the house, stables, orchard, garden, spring house, smoke house, etc. Lancaster Court House Deed H-20-356.
- **1920:** March 20. Annie S. Hess, widow of Jonas H. Hess, along with Henry F. Hess and Christian F. Hess, deed farm to Henry F. Hess. Lancaster Court House Deed E-24-513.
- **1923:** January 10. Henry F. and Anna C. Hess of Lancaster Township deed 83 acres and 25 perches in Warwick Township to B. F. Grosh of Warwick Township. Lancaster Court House Deed X-25-432.
- Later deeds not researched by Clarke Hess, who researched the earlier deeds listed above.
- **1985:** March 29. Log farmhouse purchased by Clarke Hess from Robert and Margaret A. Fuller.
- **1993:** November 19. Stone farmhouse purchased by Clarke Hess from William Wrigley Jr. Company of Chicago, makers of Wrigley Chewing Gum. Wrigley previously planned to demolish the stone farmhouse, and build a chewing gum factory at that site.

The Hess Family Cemetery

The Hess cemetery, near the log farmhouse, is a historic burial site for Hess family members. There are more than 25 burials here, including Jacob Hess, who immigrated to Pennsylvania in 1717.

Burials include second-generation through seventh-generation Hesses. The first-generation immigrant Hesses are buried at the Hans Hess Cemetery near Willow Street, Lancaster County.

The grave markers are surrounded by a masonry wall. The cemetery has been maintained by the nearby Hess Mennonite Church, and is now maintained by a home owners' association.

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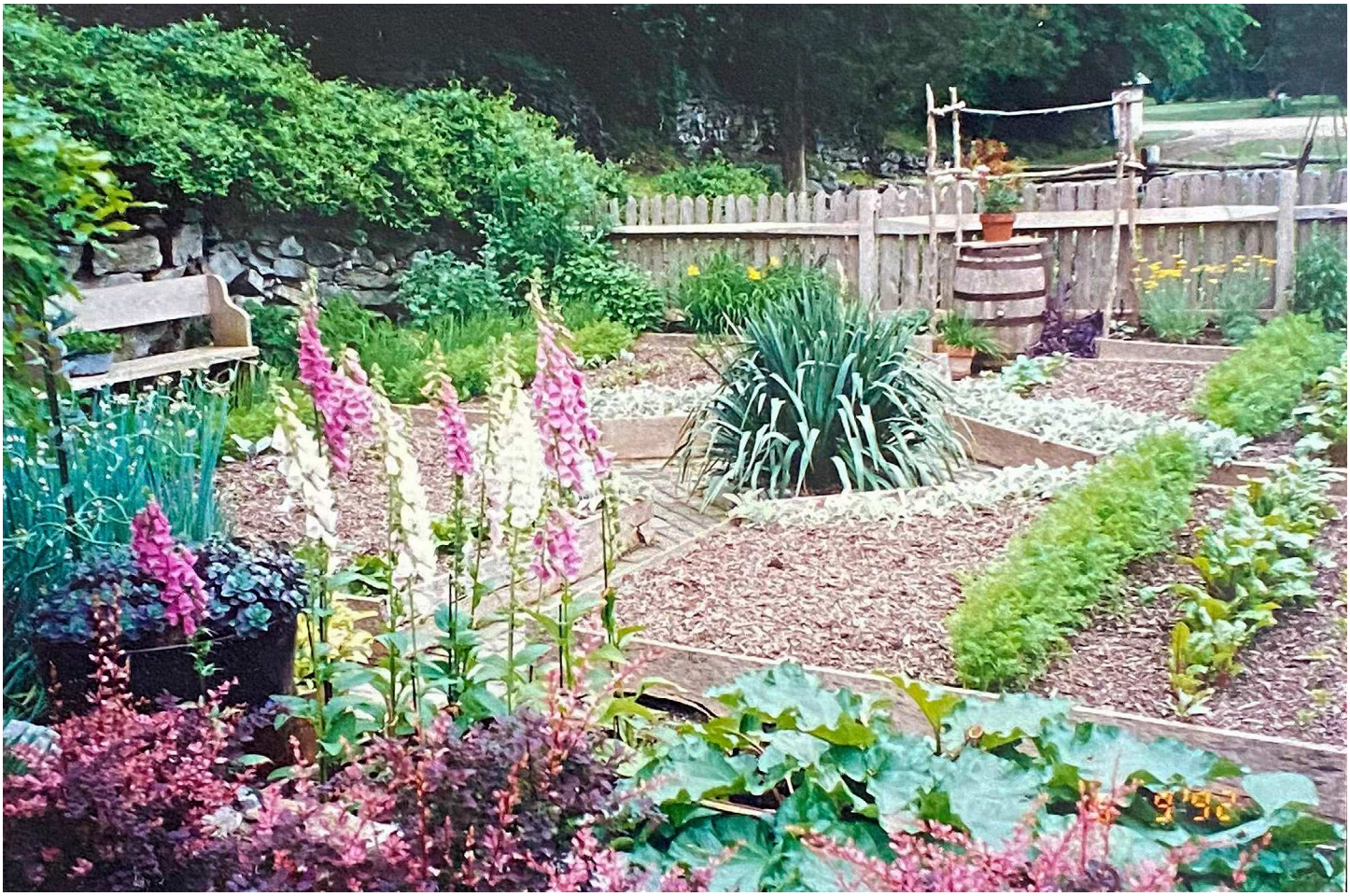
Right: 1917 photo: The baby is Ruth N. Horst (mother of Clarke Hess). Ruth sits on the laps of her grandparents John M. Stoner (nicknamed Pappy) and Barbara B. (Snyder) Stoner. Ruth’s uncle, Clayton S. Stoner, wears a necktie, because he had not joined the Mennonite church.

Pappy (Grandfather) had not joined a Mennonite church, so he does not wear a plain coat in the photo. Milton S. Stoner (far right) has a beard, as he is a member of the Church of the Brethren, and is not Mennonite. He was a preacher and ordained elder for Kempers and Blue Ball congregations.



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- *The Hess Homestead - A Mennonite Farm in Lancaster County, PA.*
- *The Black Art - A History of Printing and Publishing in Lancaster County, PA*
- *John Fass - A Pennsylvania Dutch Artist in New York City*
- *Historic Mennonite Farms and Homes in Lititz, Pennsylvania*
- *The Photography of Dillman Bomberger, Lititz, Lancaster County, PA*
- *The Historic One-Story Houses of Lancaster, PA*
- *Lancaster Streeetscape - Historic Townhouses of Lancaster, PA*

Epilogue

Time marches on, at the Hess Homestead, as it always has. Clarke Hess and I lived at the homestead for more than 30 years. In 2018 Clarke passed away peacefully in his sleep in the log farmhouse from the disease ALS.

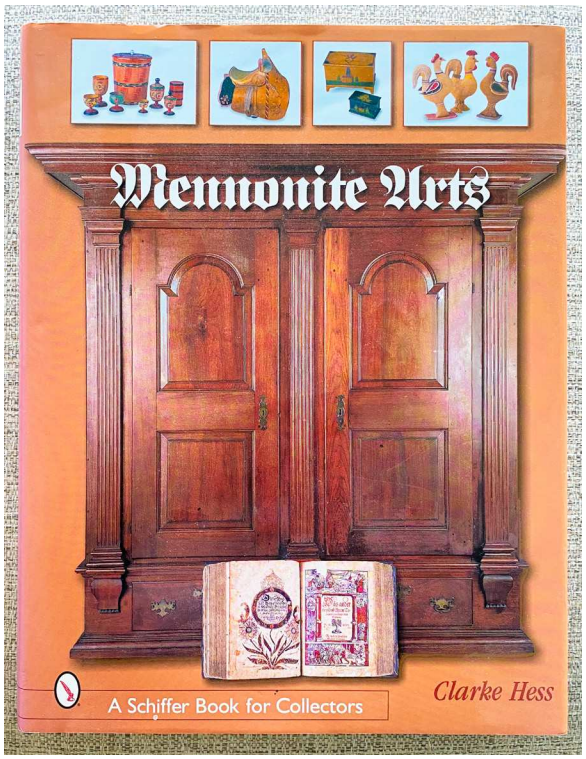
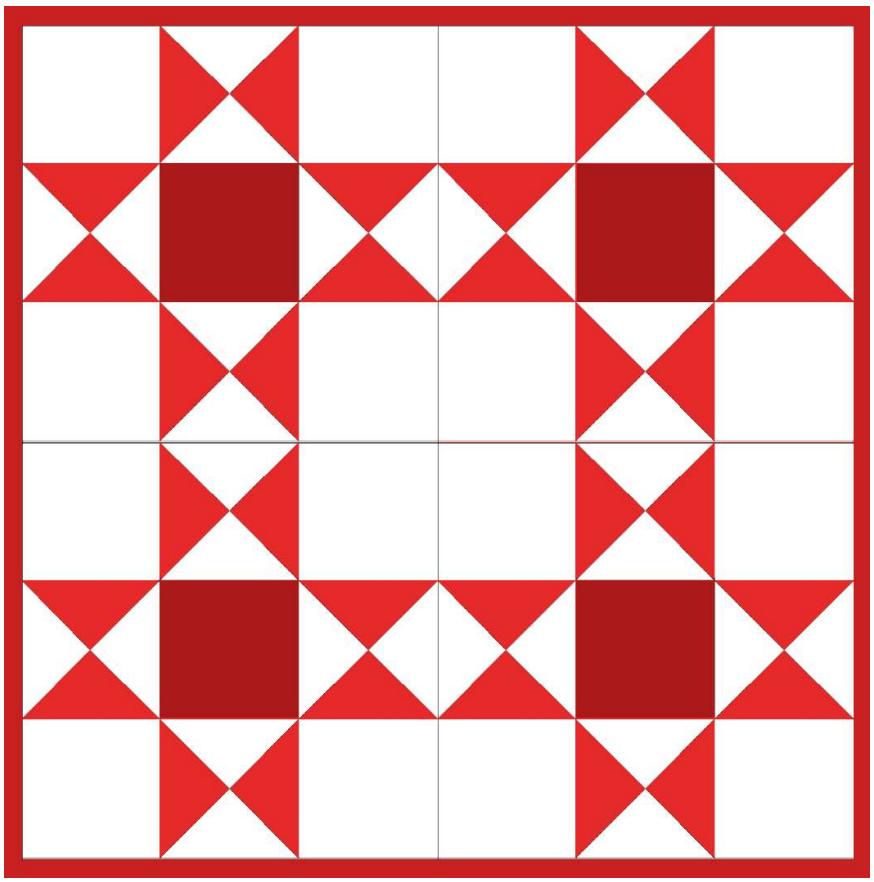
Many generations of Clarke's relatives had been born and died in that same farmhouse. He knew them all by name.

Clarke completed his circle of life there on the farm as his family had done since the 1700s.

The antiques collections and real estate were sold in 2019, as Clarke wished. The current homestead owners are now living the next chapter of the Hess Homestead history.

Lee J. Stoltzfus

The Hess Homestead library



Mennonite Arts, by Clarke Hess, 2002.